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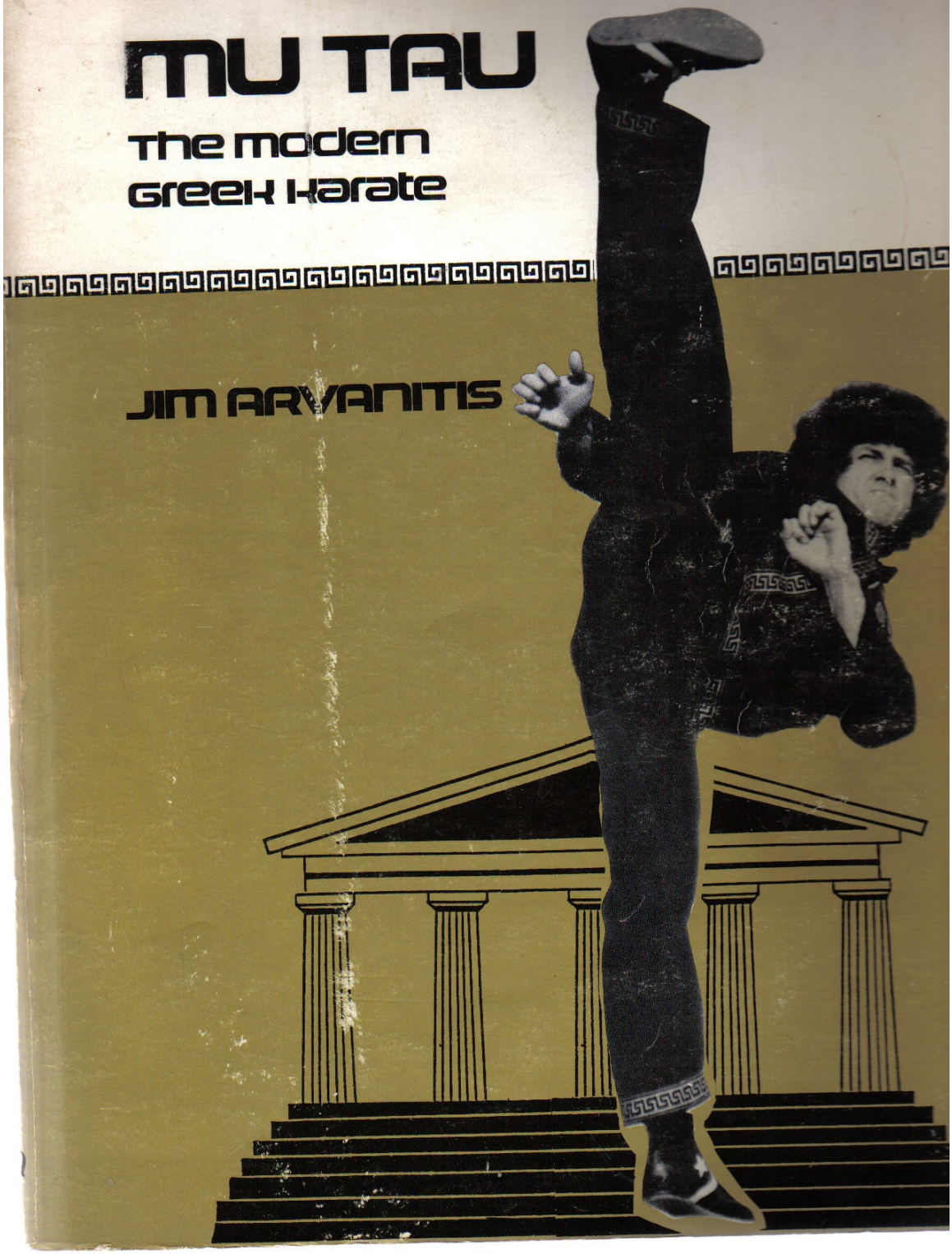
MU TAU

The modern Greek Karate

JIM ARVANITIS



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The modern Greek Karate

JIM ARVANITIS

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First Edition

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Contents

PREFACE ix

FOREWORD xi

CHAPTER 1/INTRODUCTION 1
- History of Greek Martial Art 1
- Pankration Today 3
- The MU TAU Philosophy 4
- The Framework of MU TAU 9

CHAPTER 2/TECHNICAL DYNAMICS 11
- Strength 11
- Speed 11
- Power 12
- Endurance 14
- Neuromuscular Coordination 14
- Agility 15
- Balance 15
- Flexibility 16
- Timing 16
- Form 17
- Accuracy 17
- Sensitivity 17

CHAPTER 3/BASIC TECHNIQUES 21
- Position of Readiness 21
- Mobility 26
- Distancing 30

CHAPTER 4/ATTACK 33
- Natural Weapons Chart 35
- Targets 36
- The MU TAU Weaponry 40
- The Fist 40
- Other Hand Blows 71
- The Foot 76
- The Elbow 113
- The Knee 115
- Grappling 116
- Foul Tactics 123
- Scoring the Attack 123

CHAPTER 5/DEFENSE 127
- Parries 127
- Evasions 129
- Blocking 134
- Jamming 135

CHAPTER 6/ADVANCED TECHNIQUES 137
- Counterattack 137
- Immobilizations 138
- Drawing 139
- Rolling 142
- Angling 142

CHAPTER 7/STRATEGY 145
- Some Fighting Stratagems 145
- Opponent Relationship 146
- Street Savvy 147

CHAPTER 8/TRAINING.....151
Psychological Condition.....151
Physiological Condition.....153
Warming Up.....153
Endurance Training.....158
Waist Training.....159
Muscle Development.....160
Sharpening the Tools.....170
Sparring.....181

ABOUT THE AUTHOR.....187

Preface

This book is to serve as the most comprehensive source of reference on MU TAU. It was originally meant for use solely by my followers and students, but the overwhelming interest shown by the general public has prompted me to make this work available to all. Over the past seven years, I have put forth a great deal of time and effort into this project but I must admit that I have enjoyed every minute of it. It has provided me with valuable spiritual insight.

MU TAU is my personal philosophy of martial art. I practice it as a physical culture, a means of self-protection, and a vehicle for self-improvement. Based on many sources, above all, self-discovery, MU TAU is designed to cultivate the mind, body, and spirit of the individual. Though I originally emphasized the self-defense aspect, I have attempted to transform my knowledge into a science, an art, a philosophy, and a way of life. I have devoted myself to training my body through regular exercise and practice; I have developed my mind through reading, observation, and analysis. The material contained within represents my twenty years of experience in this fascinating field.

In 1973, MU TAU became internationally recognized as a "new form" of martial art. It was to become the topic for numerous magazine and newspaper articles. My demonstrations on national television promoted the art even further, but in a manner I felt was right. As a result, there has been a rash of MU TAU "experts" appearing on the scene. These are just phonies who know nothing of the art nor of its movement.

At present, there is but a handful of dedicated MU TAU-ists. These few disciples make up an "informal" school of this exclusive art. To date, I have authorized only two of my disciples to teach MU TAU: Mr. Douglas Terry, who began studying under me in 1966, and Mr. Nick Hines, who started his training in 1972. Since I have never liked large classes nor wanted to teach commercially, my assistants keep the classes small (8 to 10 students) and select the members with great care. The MU TAU following is a very elite group; new members are admitted only after being carefully screened. Only those students displaying outstanding mental and physical qualities ever stand a chance of learning the finer points of MU TAU.

The MU TAU academies are "exclusive" establishments, bearing no commercial signs on the outside to identify them and using a minimum of advertising to attract students. However, if one wants to learn the art badly enough, he will be able to uncover where they are.

I no longer teach publicly. My students are carefully chosen and are mostly high-ranking practitioners of different styles who take private instruction at my home once a week. This allows me the time necessary to provide quality instruction to that small circle of qualified pupils, and to continually develop the art through daily training and research.

The major concepts of MU TAU, as you will see, are in sharp contrast to the older, regimented versions of self-defense. The quest of this presentation is not to belittle any of the "classical" stuff but to expand the minds of all martial artists who seek a more practical approach, realizing that the man is always more important than the style he represents. I sincerely hope that whoever reads it may shed his prejudice as to what is better or best and seek the usefulness of my thoughts in his own personal development.

Jim Arvanitis

Foreword

by Massad F. Ayoob

The early 1970s were the heyday of the martial arts in America. Many commentators likened karate to hula hoops, tailfins, and the Twist, but it wasn't really a fad. Instead, an idea whose time had come...and had come so many times in human history...had reached the contemporary United States.

When the karate craze slowly became moribund after Bruce Lee's death, it left the martial arts the stronger for it. Dojos, or karate schools, had practically bloomed on every corner, and it seemed that everyone who had ever had three lessons was declaring himself a tenth degree black belt and opening his own school to cash in.

I was in the midst of this, because from 1971 to 1975, I worked as feature writer for BLACK BELT and KARATE ILLUSTRATED, the world's leading martial arts magazines. My assignments there were varied, taking me from the dingiest dojos to national championships, and bringing me in contact with karate personalities ranging from total flakes to world champions of the caliber of Bill Wallace and Jeff Smith.

There was never a culture quite like the martial arts world of the early 70s. Few adhered to any standards. New "styles" of karate and other fighting forms flourished, and the gullible public bought them, often signing two-year contracts with a karate club only to return a week later and find the "storefront gymnasium" closed, and their deposit gone for good.

In short, there was a lot of bullshit running rampant during that time, and to those of us who knew the scene, the emergence of Jim Arvanitis was all the more to be appreciated.

When we first heard about "Mu Tau," Jim's newly created martial art, we were skeptical. "Oh, good grief...here's another turkey with a made-up name for a made-up method he wants to get rich off!" I groaned when I was assigned to check him out and see if he was worth a story. It turned out to be perhaps the most informative experience in my career in martial arts journalism.

Some karate magazines were garbage that published flack and puffery, often written by the subject's own students, who would then be awarded promotions. BLACK BELT and KARATE ILLUSTRATED, when Bob McLaughlin and Rick Shively were editing them, were above that. We researched everybody. And the research on Arvanitis turned up an athletic Greek-American with strong ethnic ties, who had studied a wide variety of fighting arts early in his life. Our deeper research showed that he had, indeed, drawn from Pankration, the little known, ancient combat form of Greece that was so frighteningly destructive that it was banned as a sport.

We were becoming more interested, and the final proof was Arvanitis himself. We had heard a lot about this guy but I wasn't one to accept mere rumor. Yet, when I witnessed what Arvanitis could do, I had to admit I was awestruck. A slight 135-pounder then, he could pump his muscles with the same effect of a blowfish doubling in size, and he had incredible speed and preternatural striking ability. Of anyone I had ever met, Jim was one of the most dynamic and one of the most skillful.

When I saw him kick men flying, I naturally assumed they were students faking the demonstration to make him look good. Then, one day, I volunteered to hold the air shield while he kicked and learned for myself the awesome power this man commanded, through the scientific knowledge he had developed of how to propel his body forth, coupled with his own superb level of physical fitness. It was now apparent to all of us that this was no ordinary martial artist.

I wrote him up, and he appeared on the cover of BLACK BELT, and later in other martial arts journals. It is not necessary for me to comment on his techniques; they explain themselves in the text you are about to read. I can only tell you that I know the martial arts world far better than most people, because I had a unique opportunity to get inside it on the national level, and I can tell the good phonies from the bad phonies from the real masters. Arvanitis is one of the latter.

Jim Arvanitis went through many phases, to each of

which he committed himself totally. When he developed Mu Tau as a street-fighting art, he deliberately engaged in alley brawls to test his theories. I would have cocked an eyebrow at the typical karateka who told me that, but I backgrounded Arvanitis and found he was telling the truth. In the years that followed, I watched Jim evolve into an artist, constantly training to improve himself.

Ego? Better believe it. Among martial arts practioners, inflated ego is no more unusual than inflated biceps among weightlifters. Some let it overwhelm them. Jim was content to let his overwhelm others, and it worked because his ego was built on hard training, principle, and performance instead of soft bullshit. I saw and photographed Jim set a World Record for pushups on but his thumbs, saw him sledge down men literally twice his size with a single blow, saw him disarm master knife fighters who would have slashed most karate experts into beef jerky. The ego was forgiveable, for Jim and for a handful of martial artists who were truly high achievers; the nature of the martial arts is that you learn to control all around you, and to do so you must control yourself, and the total confidence required for both becomes something so close to ego that it's the same for all practical purposes. In a world of showoffs, one suspects the introvert; Jim had enough pride in his own self-development that he never tried to hide it, and many mistook that well-founded display of personal achievement as showing off. They didn't understand.

I'm out of the martial arts scene now. Were I to recommend a teacher today, of national stature, there are still many who deserve their reputations: George Pesare, George Mattson, Ki Whang Kim, Bill Wallace, Jeff Smith, Bob Campbell, and some others. I know all these men, having sparred with some of them...but if I were to go back to the dojo myself today, I have no question that the instructor I would seek out would be Jim Arvanitis.

His is the most practical street combat form of the martial arts I have ever seen, backed by one of the most sophisticated and scientific approaches to training and full-contact sparring. I have debriefed dozens of his followers, and none was ever shortchanged. They are in awe of him, not only for his superior physical prowess, but for his ability to teach his ideas and pass on his knowledge to others.

You are about to read the story of what is very likely the most efficient form of unarmed combat ever devised. It is so because of its human orientation, its flexibility, the fact that it is always open to change and almost totally adaptable to any person. I had the rare opportunity to see the best of the martial arts as practiced in this country today, and to work with the best. I feel that Mu Tau is the best and most practical martial art being taught today, and that Jim Arvanitis is very likely the finest all-around martial artist America has yet produced.

Massad F. Ayoob, 1979

ABOUT THE WRITER: "Prominent martial arts journalist Massad Ayoob," as John Corcoran described him in "The Illustrated Encyclopedia of Karate", helped influence the martial arts scene in America for half a decade. Presently teaching self-defense to police and civilians, he has moved into the firearms area, and at this writing, is the third-ranked combat shooter in the Northeastern United States, and among the top ten money winners in professional class combat shooting in America.

Chapter 1

Introduction

HISTORY OF GREEK MARTIAL ART

The Greek culture has long been acknowledged for its excellence in athletics and in warfare. The Greeks reign as the only true athletic nation of antiquity. To them, in fact, we owe the word "athlete" and the ideal that it expresses. Being both a competitive and warlike people, it was only natural that the Greeks would be among the first practitioners of their own formidable brand of martial arts, one which aspired to unrestricted, total combat.

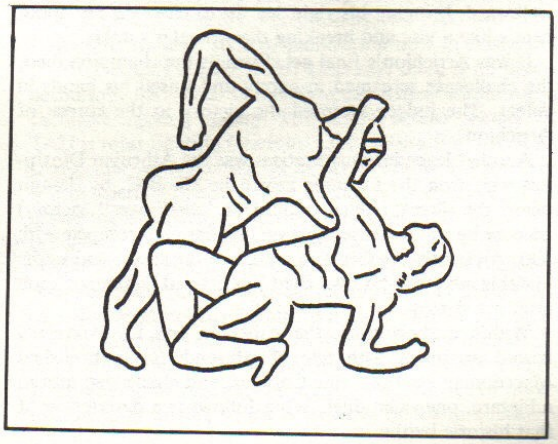
Prior to 648 B.C., the Greeks developed PANKRATION (literally, "all powers"). Pankration was an ancient fighting form in which every physical and mental resource—hands and feet, mind and spirit—were combined in all-out combat. Once the most significant part of the early Olympic games, pankration may have influenced the martial arts to a degree that few modern practitioners realize.

From the beginning, it was as close to no-holds-barred competition that any culture has ever allowed. Only biting and gouging was forbidden, anything else went. Now almost unknown, pankration was the cornerstone of the first Olympic Games. It was considered the ultimate test of strength and skill, of stamina and courage. The ancient Greeks considered boxing, wrestling, and pankration the "heavy" events of their athletic world. Of these, pankration was the most spectacular and the most dangerous.

The first and greatest of the national Greek sports festival was the Olympic Games of 776 B.C. which was held in Olympia. From this date, the Games were staged every four years until 393 A.D. Boxing was the first combative sport introduced at the events of 776 B.C., with wrestling coming later in 688 B.C. In 648 B.C., pankration was entered into the Games. A subdivision, boy's pankration, was added in the second century B.C., which verifies the tremendous popularity of this sport.

There is proof that pankration was the most important of all athletic contests. At one tournament in the city of Aphrodisia in Asia Minor, the winner of the pankration was awarded 3000 dinarii. The pentathlon victor earned only 500 dinarii. In rough comparison with present-day American currency, the winning pankratiast took home a purse equivalent to $60,000. And the tournaments at Aphrodisia were relatively small affairs!

Pankration was a development from the primitive rough and tumble fight. The best of unarmed combat was converted into a scientific art and sport. Bouts were conducted under the strictest rules which were enforced by officials who flogged violators with stout rods or switches. The rules, however, were often broken. A poet of the period dubbed one group of pankratiasts "the lions" due to their propensity for biting. An ancient Greek painting in the London Museum depicts a referee lashing a pankratiast who is gouging his opponent's eyes out. A reason for the frequent breaking of rules might have been due to the absence of weight categories in which a small man might be matched against a much larger adversary. A whipping became more tolerable that being killed or maimed by a more powerful foe.

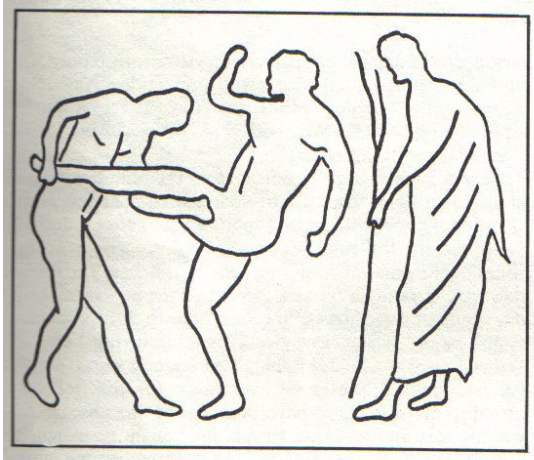


INTRODUCTION

Facing one another, the combatants attempted to bring one another to the ground heavily by grappling, hitting, kicking, or leg sweeping. The hands were normally uncovered and generally open, though the clenched first was also used for punching. As a general rule, the contest was decided on the ground, and when both fighters were down, hitting was usually ineffective.

The feats of the ancient pankratiasts became legendary in the annals of Greek athletics. One such contest, and perhaps the most famous, was recorded by Philostratus, a fight reporter of the era. The contest was fought in the early days of the sport and matched Arrichion of Phigaleia, the champion of the day, against a challenger whose name has been lost in the mists of time.

The bout took place at the Olympics in 564 B.C. The challenger sprang onto Arrichion's back and locked his forearm over the champion's throat. As Arrichion struggled to free himself, the challenger scissored his insteps behind Arrichion's thighs as he strangled the life from the master pankratiast.



In a desperate dying effort, Arrichion locked one of his opponent's feet behind his right leg and threw himself backward, bringing his right leg up to close on his opponent's like a vise and breaking the strangler's ankle.

It was Arrichion's final act. Even as the champion died, the challenger screamed in agony and raised his hands in defeat. The judges awarded the victory to the corpse of Arrichion.

Another legendary pankratiast was the Athenian Dioxippus who won the Olympic crown in 336 B.C. by default (what the Greeks called akoniti, a "walk-over" victory) because he was so feared that no one dared to compete with him. Alexander the Great, a patron of the sports and a formidable athlete in his own right, befriended Dioxippus soon after his victory.

Within a short time, the Athenian was involved in a heated argument with one of Alexander's accomplished Macedonian warriors, one Coragus, and challenged him to a bizzare, one-sided duel. What follows is a description of that historic battle:

> Coragus appeared in full armor, with javelin, lance, and sword as his weapons. Dioxippus, as befitted an athlete, was completely naked, gleaming with olive oil and armed only with a club. First Coragus threw his javelin, which Dioxippus easily dodged. Next he charged with the lance, but Dioxippus shattered its shaft with a blow of his club. Then, as he tried to draw his sword, Dioxippus trapped his adversary's sword-arm with his own left hand, and with his right threw Coragus off his balance; at the same moment, with the skill of a trained pankratiast, he swept his feet from under him. Coragus crashed to the ground, and as he lay prostrate Dioxippus marked the completeness of his triumph by setting his foot on his enemy's neck.

Alexander, a Macedonian, resented the Greek's spectacular triumph over his landsman. In retaliation, Dioxippus was framed for theft and forced to commit suicide. But his victory over the armed and armored warrior remains as one of history's most striking lessons of the pankratiast's prowess.

Still another famed pankratiast was Polydamas of Scottusa in Thessaly. He won only once at Olympia in 408 B.C. He was the tallest man on record to ever do battle in the pankration. The feat of Polydamas that made him a legendary figure occurred as a gesture of good faith to the king of Persia, who invited the pankratiast to give an exhibition of his skill at Susa. To repay the kindness of his host, he killed the Immortals, three of the royal bodyguard, in what was supposed to be a friendly match.

Finally, there was a veritable Superman who killed lions and bulls barehanded, brought rushing chariots to a standstill with one hand, and could snap a cord tied around his forehead by swelling the veins in his temples. He is said to have died when a cave collapsed upon him and a band of friends: with his great strength, he held back the very earth until his companions could escape the cave-in.

Like all Greek athletes, the original pankratiasts wore no clothing. They fought barehanded at first, but rawhide thongs were later adopted that went over the hands and up the forearms. Still later, sheepskins were affixed to the forearm thongs to allow the fighters to wipe blood and sweat from their eyes. The first clothed pankratiasts were the Roman fighters who wore shorts, which the early Greek purists considered decadent.

Greek combative sports naturally varied in rules and style. Although the great national festivals of Greece tended to produce uniformity, local rules undoubtedly existed. An example presents itself in an inscription of the second century A.D., discovered at the village of Fassiller in Pisidia, containing regulations for some local sports. In the Classical Review and Papers of the American School of Classical Studies of Athens, it states that the pankratiasts were "not to use sand to dust themselves like wrestlers, nor are they to use wrestling, but to contend with upright hitting." In other words, there was to be no wrestling, no grappling on the ground, only fighting with bare hands and the use of kicks. It was further stipulated that a man who had won a prize

must not compete again the same day, while if a slave was successful, he must surrender a quarter of the prize money to the other competitors.

Pankration was taught progressively as a sort of drill to a pair of pupils or to an entire class arranged in pairs. When the student had mastered the basic movements and their numerous combinations, he proceeded to "loose-play" (free-sparring). Pankration was part of the school curriculum and was considered just as important as academics. Every male student was required to earn credits in various athletic endeavors during his education. The ancient Greek system of education integrated and related athletics, courage, and knowledge to a way of life. Thus, many Greek athletes were well-educated.

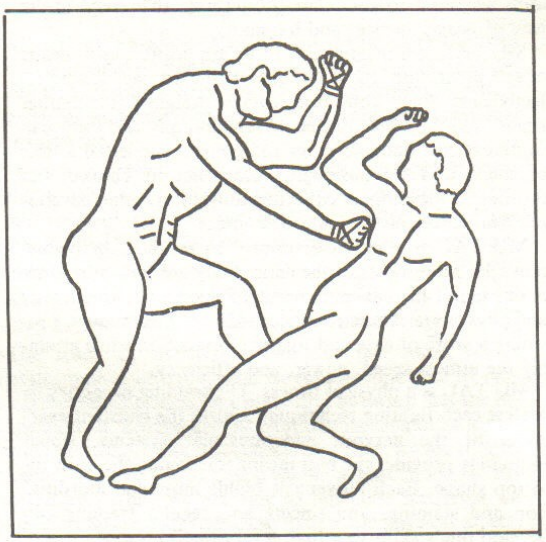
The Romans, too, adopted the pankration, but in the degrading atmosphere of the savage gladiatorial arena, it changed for the worse. The Romans modified the sport by arming the fighters with the cestus, a brutal spiked and weighted glove. This development destroyed the skill that was the essence of the pankration. The science and aesthetics that the Greeks had come to value so highly was replaced by an increase in blood and gore.

The story of Creugas and Damoxenus illustrates the impact of Greek fighting techniques during Roman times. About 400 B.C. at Nemea these two fighters struggled into the dusk without a decision. They finally agreed to permit each other to strike one last blow, unresisted, to settle the issue. Creugas struck first, punching Damoxenus solidly in the head. Damoxenus, however, weathered the blow, and ordered his rival to raise his left arm. He then struck Creugas with his open hand, spear-like, with such force that it penetrated Creugas' side, killing him instantly.

Due to its cruelty, pankration was eventually banned from the Games as a competitive sport. Its practice continued, however, particularly by Greek soldiers whose rugged discipline and fighting spirit enhanced the ferocity of the ancient art. Once the soldier was disarmed of his sword and spear on the battlefield, the empty-hand weapons of pankration became the logical means of survival. The men under Alexander the Great were primarily influential in introducing elements of pankration as far east as India in the fourth century B.C. From here, several versions emerged and flourished throughout Asia until finally, the Okinawans called their system "karate"—a phonetic similarity to the ancient Greek "pankration."

The theory that karate descended from pankration is believed to be true by many historians. Besides the similarities in technique, the close resemblance of practice methods bears evidence to confirm their belief. For example, ancient Greek pugilists broke stones with their bare fists for spectators and some pankratiasts were thought to have been able to kick through shields. This typifies the demonstrations of striking force of modern karateka. The abdominal shout (Japanese kiai) and "flowing inner energy" (ki in Japanese, chi in Chinese, and pneuma in Greek) were advocated by ancient Greeks in their craft as they are today in Eastern systems. Even the stress put on the foothold by classical karate and kung fu styles is not unique. In ancient Rome, there was an exercise in which a boxer or pankratiast stood on a disk as others tried to pull it from under him.

The Greek pankration, once the supreme test of human skill and endurance in all the world, was perhaps also the most demanding and exciting martial art that ever existed.



PANKRATION TODAY

The original form of pankration is now almost extinct. Even in the old country, the subject of pankration is rather obscure, with few knowledgeable sources on its history and techniques. In the United States, there are even fewer martial arts practitioners that are even remotely familiar with the "unchained karate of ancient Greece."

No one really knows what happened to pankration after the Roman conquest of Greece. Many feel that it divided into the two combative sports of boxing and wrestling as we know them today. Others seem to think that the art is not dead but continues to be practiced in secrecy by a hard core of afficionados in Athens who strive to keep the flame flickering.

In the process of development and improvement, many styles and modifications evolved from the old. The only true attempt at reviving the concepts of the ancient Greek martial art has been in the creation of MU TAU. MU TAU is the only modern style of pankration now in existence.

What exactly is MU TAU? Literally, there is no precise definition; MU TAU is merely a convenient name for an exclusive fighting system. The central theme behind MU TAU is total fighting freedom. Like pankration, MU TAU transcends yet encompasses all styles and is a distinct art within itself. Boundless and formless, it encourages the mastering of efficient fighting ability without the burden of having to follow a "set" pattern.

MU TAU is essentially discipline: discipline of the mind, body, and spirit. The physical manifestations in the form of lethal attacks only comprise a mere part of the whole and, though they are the most dramatic, they are not the most important. They simply provide a measure of progress in tangible physical terms. Just the practice of the art without ever having to use it to harm or maim another is

the goal of any true martial artist. However, to avenge a wrong or protect one's life, the MU TAU-ist possesses the tools necessary to annihilate those things that stand in the way of peace, justice, and humanity.

MU TAU is a martial art. In its application as a means of self-protection, the techniques of the art have killing effectiveness. Each body maneuver is designed for combat needs, and the concentrated mental and physical force can cause extreme damage to an antagonist. The lethal aspect of the MU TAU onslaught comes not by chance, but through a developed concentration of all the psychophysical forces at the point of contact.

MU TAU is a physical science. In training, individual muscular movements of the entire body are joined together as one to impart maximum results. Principles of kinesiology and physics are characteristics of MU TAU techniques, providing a sense of ease and finesse in execution while attaining the utmost speed, power, and efficiency.

MU TAU is a physical fitness. The training necessary to perfect each fighting technique requires the constant exercising of the nervous and muscular systems, which ultimately provides the best means for honing the body into top shape. Each movement builds muscular coordination and stamina, and sincere and regular training can develop one's skills to a high level of competence.

MU TAU is for self-realization. Being able to defend yourself against anything that comes your way is but a secondary objective. The real essence of MU TAU is challenging the self to develop mentally and physically to the furthest extent for understanding yourself and perceiving your potential.

At this point one might ask, "what is the difference between MU TAU and the oriental martial arts?" Though there are similarities, MU TAU is in many ways contradictory to the precepts of classical karate and kung fu. Kata (forms) and no-contact rules are absent in its practice. The essence of MU TAU inevitably comes down to actual sparring. The dynamics and impact of full-contact fighting with protective gear are fundamental in developing the skills around which the art is based.

The true value of any "art" is that it invites the goal of discovery and the blossoming of the artist. MU TAU, a progressive martial art, allows the aspiring exponent to express himself through unobstructed creativity. Once the practitioner is bound to performing 'fixed' routines required by his particular style or school, his freedom to create is stifled. Afterall, one cannot "see" the truth clearly in combat nor perceive his own genuine potential unless he is free to discover this reality for himself.

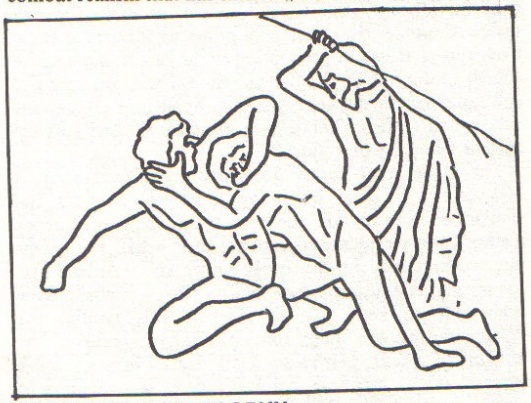
Learning MU TAU, then, is not a matter of memorized, prearranged forms, imitative drills, and spiritual yells. Nor is it the ability to collect and recite 'fixed' circumstances. Unlike the formalized establishment, MU TAU is a direct relationship with the moment. Instead of mechanical precision in illusions of the past or future, MU TAU favors spontaneous reaction in the unpredictable and everchanging action of the present. Its teaching is therefore flexible enough to fit the needs and capacities of each and every disciple.

The MU TAU Academy operates as an exclusive, private club in contrast to commercialized karate schools. Enrollment is limited to a select cadre of dedicated followers. This small membership preserves the high quality of instruction and perpetuates the way of the ancient Greek martial art.

There are no colored belts awarded in MU TAU. A black belt, for instance, does not ensure fighting skill, teaching ability, good physical condition, or devotion to one's craft. In many cases, belts serve as status symbols which, once acquired and worn about one's waist, become a limiting crutch to the need for further discovery. In MU TAU, we are not preoccupied with rank but seek constant self-improvement through training. For the sake of clarification, however, we have established the following unique ranking system:

10th Rank—Highest Proficiency Level
9th Rank—Instructor (2nd stage)
8th Rank—Instructor (1st stage)
7th Rank—Assistant Instructor
6th Rank—Advanced (2nd stage)
5th Rank—Advanced (1st stage)
4th Rank—Intermediate (2nd stage)
3rd Rank—Intermediate (1st stage)
2nd Rank—Novice (2nd stage)
1st Rank—Novice (1st stage)
No Rank—Beginner

The essential concepts of MU TAU reflect the pankration philosophy. The protective gear and training aids are derived from the latest theories of the ancient art; the freestyle format, from its earliest essence. By adapting the unrestrained free-fighting of the savage pankration to modern standards by the use of safety padding, and by adding to it the selected refinements of both Eastern and Western styles, MU TAU parallels the achievement of the ancient Greek martial art. It preserves a philosophy of combat realism that has existed for several thousand years.



THE MU TAU PHILOSOPHY

On Combat

- Combat is the ultimate test of an athlete's skill, courage, endurance and strength. Not only does it pit man against man but also man against himself.

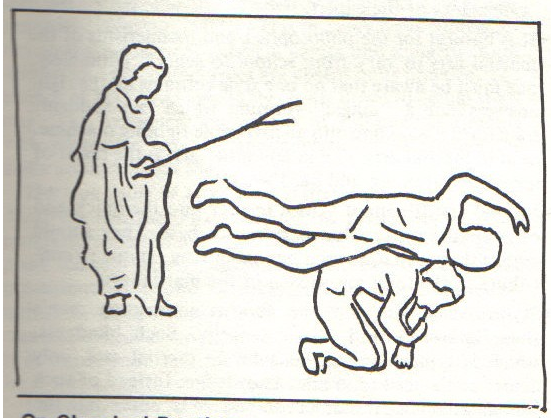
- Combat, as is, has absolutely nothing to do with a "Japanese" style, "Chinese" style, "Korean" style, "Greek" style, or "whatever" style. Just as nationalities have nothing to do with one's humanity nor do they have anything to do with the martial arts. To believe that being of a specific race, be it Japanese, Chinese, or Greek for that matter, has an effect on being a skillful martial artist is to most certainly live in darkness.
- Actual combat cannot be structured or confined. It "lives" from moment to moment and is as unpredictable as human nature itself.
- Fighting is not a matter of formality or conformity. Instead, it is the independent action of the free will.
- Combat is simple and total. It employs all ways and means to serve its end while taking a direct, no-nonsense path to victory.
- Real fighting depends on the inevitable fact of letting loose and making contact, never the habit-forming disease of holding back.
- Truth in combat cannot be perceived when one's activities are cramped and distorted by complicated fantasies and unrealistic drilling.
- Proficiency in combat is more than mechanical precision and having good form. In the street, it is nothing less than survival of the fittest.
- Just knowing the techniques of any combative art, no matter how deadly, is but half the task. Unless one is physically fit and psychologically bold, mental aptitude is not enough. It is often man's attitude and physical condition that make the difference.
- Envision for yourself what constitutes real combat. Observe such mayhem, if you will, not in terms of sport or ritual, but through the eyes of an unrestrained struggle. Are shoes removed? Do the maddened opponents bow to each other? Are blows 'pulled'? Do the fighters take charge by squatting in a horse stance? Make your conclusions according to what you see not by the artificial hypotheses and colorful distractions that have been prescribed and dictated by some outdated, brainwashing institution.
- In combat, the pugilist must be able to "take" a blow as well as "give" one. Performing co-operative routines, rehearsing specific circumstances, or grinding out a memorized form will not provide this unavoidable reality.
- Truth in fighting is alive and everchanging. It has no solidified form, methodical structure, or theoretical establishment. It "lives" in us all while our eyes are open to the facts.

The Martial Way

- The term, "martial arts", is spoken by many but understood by relatively few. Taken collectively, martial art may be defined as the expression of the self through combat. A martial artist is one who practices such a discipline.
- Martial art encompasses a physical culture, a means of effective self-protection, and a vehicle for self-expression. As such, it is a diverse tool for enhancing mental and physical discipline and awareness.
- Martial art is not only for triumph over one's opponent but for mastery over one's self.
- Martial art is a special kind of skill: a fine art rather than just a method of fighting. Its principle is not a thing that can be learned via strict system or arrangement. It has to grow spontaneously in a mind free from rigid rules and regulations.
- In its purest form, martial art constitutes a higher logic developed through diligent self-imposed practice and the ascension of the true personality: a realization of the spiritual self in the philosophic rather than the religious sense of the word.
- Martial art is a mirror of life. It reflects an image of man's quest for individuality and self-knowlege.
- The study of martial art without realization of its philosophical interpretation leaves one in a state of partial mental emptiness. We must first be aware that the inspection of martial arts is symbolic of mental attitudes and behavior. The subconscious mind is where our behavior patterns are collected in a vast mode of experiences. When we are able to tap these resources we develop positive attitudes and master the physical aspect.
- An expert martial artist's level of mental development is such that his movements are an extension of the mind.
- Look upon the martial way not as a source of unleashed savagery but as a tool for inner peace.
- Martial arts are designed to challenge the practitioner to the cultivation of speed, physical prowess, and mental alertness. Conditioned reflexes and instant action are trademarks of the expert.
- It is natural for the philosophies and mannerisms of the martial arts to vary from school to school. Ultimately, one must be aware that no one style contains all the right answers nor a "magic" formula which can suddenly transform a weakling into an invincible fighting machine. Skill in martial arts, like in any other art, is the result of specialized training and hard work.
- Martial artists cannot afford to veer into the quicksand of prejudice as to what is better or best. They should realize that each approach has something unique to contribute to the total knowledge of the martial arts.
- Stylists only condemn one another illustrating man's sheer ignorance and idiotic tenacity. Such blindness, which is typical human behavior in martial arts, only denies one's need of greater knowledge. Instead of such jealous criticism, the object should be to appreciate the values of each style and to respect the individuality of all men.
- The real martial artist transcends style. In fact, it is man who "makes" the style; style never "makes" the man.
- All martial artists, regardless of style or particular preference, strive towards oneness of mind and body. It is this same oneness that blossoms man's own being above all else.
- It is comparatively easy to attain the qualities of a "fighter" but not so easy to gain those of a complete

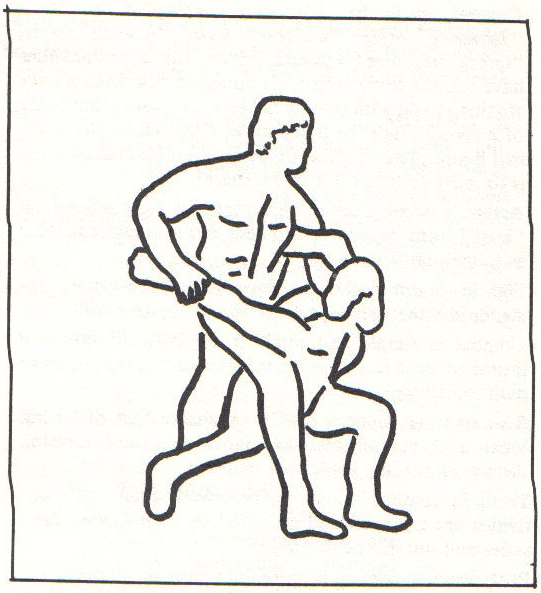
martial artist. Whereas the fighter depends on but his fists for expression, the martial artist relies on intellectual insight as well as his physical attributes.

- A really good martial artist is least concerned with the need for showing off or boasting to others of his profound knowledge. On the contrary, he is interested in inner competition and self-improvement. His greatest challenges are in overcoming the weaknesses within himself.
- A kick or punch is psychological as well as physical. Not only are they useful in obliterating the opposition but they are a means of knocking hell out of your own ego, fears, and emotional hangups.
- Martial art is best appreciated when one is free to express himself. This might be accomplished through individual practice, physical interaction with others, or informative demonstrations of the art.
- Some martial arts are very popular because they look flashy and dramatic. Other martial arts are not as impressive due to their practical simplicity. However this offers no evidence as to which art is better or best because, ultimately, it is the man behind the art that proves superior.
- Such exhibitions as lying on a bed of nails and swordcutting watermelons on some poor guy's chest indicate a degree of mental and physical competence but should never be construed as actual fighting skill. Such stunts tell nothing of one's talents in protecting himself.
- A prerequisite in martial arts is an earnest student, for if the wrong man uses the right means, the right means work in the wrong way.



On Classical Routines

- Memorizing a prearranged series of strict movements without an opponent may indeed develop a sense of security and mechanical expertise. Real combat, however, entails free-thinking and immediate adaptability.
- A well-executed form does portray beauty and grace but all-out combat is anything but.
- Mere repetition of static, calculated movements deprives combat motion of its realism and fluid interchangeability.



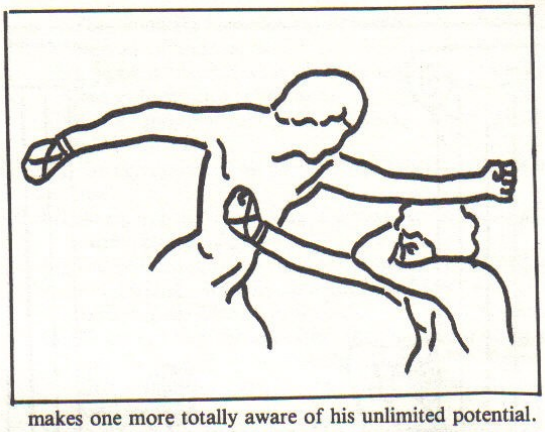
- Forms squelch creativity and tend to arrest the ever-flowing reality of combat. Rather than experiencing the here and now, forms create illusions of what was or what might be.
- Learning is not mere imitation nor is it the ability to accumulate and regurgitate "fixed" knowledge. Learning is a process of discovery, a process without end.
- Art, remember, is self-expression, not the exact emulation of someone else.
- Prearranged patterns of movements restrict one's natural freedom and invent possible situations which do not yet exist. Therefore, a preset move, no matter how cleverly executed, dictates a "fixed" response. True combat, on the other hand, is always uncertain and fresh. It demands a pliable mental awareness—a spontaneous mind—not rigid recollection.
- If you attempt to meet the unconventional attack with a chosen pattern of rhythmical classic blocks and counters, you may be overwhelmed at your inadequacy to function efficiently.
- For individual growth, one's training must be free and diversified. Instead of accumulating complex forms, martial arts drilling should satisfy the need for simplicity of expression.
- Preset sparring, too, lacks reality. Such a choice routine where one man attacks and another blocks and counters according to specific circumstances is a futile attempt to arrest the true fluidity of combat.
- Your opponent in a fixed method of sparring is nothing more than a cooperative partner—a robot! Your adversary in actual combat is a hellion bent on destroying you. Prepare for him as such!!
- Without consistent practice in free-sparring, it is practically impossible to adjust proper distance or exact tim-

ing with a live opponent. Precontrived sparring (be it one-step, two-step, etc.) offers little in this regard. Be aware that there is a great contrast between applying your fighting techniques with an obedient partner who stands there and cooperates and an uncompliant foe who moves constantly.

- Skill in any preset drill will definitely supply a feeling of security. What happens, though, when this rehearsal of certain responses is deceived by a non-classical fighter whose wicked combinations come out of nowhere to pass by your rigid, preset block? Remember, opponents in the street do not usually attack with the standard punches or holds used in these activities but use anything and everything to knock you senseless. Therefore, be aware of and ready for swings, tackles, and all else!!

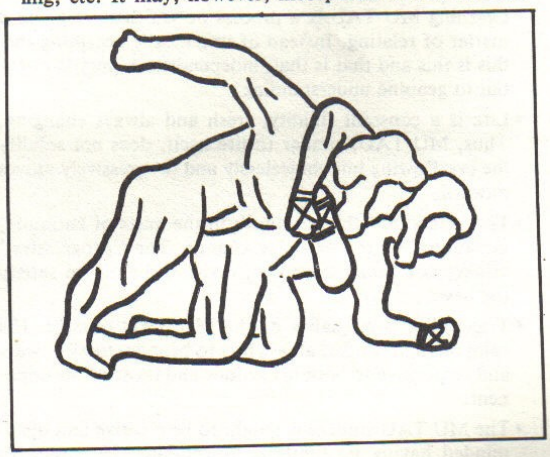
The Total Fighting Freedom

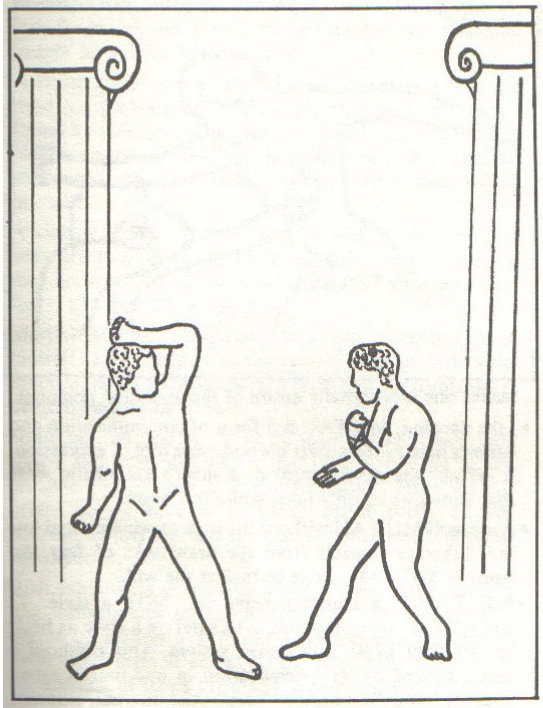
- MU TAU is training and discipline toward the ultimate reality of combat. It is a progressive (not rigid) philosophy whose emphasis is on perceiving and experiencing the truth in self-defense.
- A purpose of this art is to free one's practice of wasted, unnecessary trivialities, getting right to the essence of the Martial Way which is the study and realistic application of self-expressed combat movements.
- The term, "MU TAU", has no real literal translation. It is actually an acronym (a combination of Greek letters) for "Martial Truths."
- A MU TAU exponent experiences realism and totality, not mystical revelations and a partial view of things.
- MU TAU represents a way of thinking and a flowing lifestyle requiring strict discipline. It is a means of training both the mind and body whereby great emphasis is focused on evolving the individual's uniqueness.
- Spontaneity and creativity bring out the natural assets of the individual. Such qualities are to be stimulated, not denied.
- MU TAU is, ultimately, a highly-developed personal spirituality and physique. It varies from man to man and is a matter of determined efforts and diligent training.
- MU TAU dissolves the obsolete, simplifies the complex, and takes the most direct route to the very heart of hand-to-hand combat.
- In MU TAU, it is the creative mind which enables us to see the truth clearly.
- Do not attempt to "straight-jacket" MU TAU into a neat phrase; nor should you try to classify it as a standard commodity. Though simple in execution, it is not so simple to explain.
- The Way of MU TAU does not dwell in the past. It proceeds on the action of the moment and fulfills the demands of the present-day martial artist.
- The roots of MU TAU are old but its concepts of teaching and training are fresh and progressive.
- MU TAU inspires vast learning, not only of combat movements but of one's self. Lacking boundaries, it



makes one more totally aware of his unlimited potential.

- Like dancing, MU TAU is a form of communication and enables man to rediscover his body as a tool of expression. It permits the development of a superb kinesthetic sense that allows us to fully understand our body.
- Approach MU TAU without the idea of winning and losing. Liberate yourself from the drawbacks of fear and pain. In MU TAU, strive to master the will.
- MU TAU is a comprehensive art, NOT a style. To understand this distinction, let us define a style as being an offshoot of an established system. This offshoot is characterized by its specialization in one partial aspect (i.e. the "soft" versus the "hard", the internal/external, etc.). Most styles, then, are incomplete, clinging to this isolated trait.
- Some styles favor punching, other styles prefer kicks, while still others accent either the straight line or the curved. Adverse to this separative nonsense, MU TAU is "total" without preference to hands or legs but employing an equal balance of both. It further dismisses the stylized notion of a set course, utilizing both angles and lines to serve its end.
- MU TAU is not a style of any established system be it karate or kung fu, boxing or kickboxing, judo or wrestling, etc. It may, however, incorporate useful elements





from each. Like the ancient Greek pankration, MU TAU transcends yet encompasses all styles and is a distinct art within itself.

- Radically dissimilar to the formalized establishment, The Progressive Martial Way is 'informal', without the obsolete ceremony that only obscures individuality, self-discovery, and creative observation.
- MU TAU values the direct challenges of pitting man against man and man against himself. The self-discipline and inward motivation of the latter benefits the former and are the keys to growth in any art.
- Learning MU TAU is a process of self-discovery and a matter of relating. Instead of uncritically accepting that this is this and that is that, independent inquiry is essential to genuine understanding.
- Life is a constant fluidity, fresh and always changing. Thus, MU TAU, similar to life itself, does not solidify the everflowing but choicelessly and progressively moves onward.
- The "classical" thinker dwells in the mists of antiquity, undaunted by the need for change. The "progressive" thinker constantly advances, revising the old to satisfy the new.
- Tranquility is a quality of the MU TAU disciple. His calm mind in combat allows him to be more totally aware and responsive to both his actions and those of his opponent.
- The MU TAU student is taught to be creative and open-minded having no limits or restrictions. He strives to fulfill his potential by pressing ahead, not standing still.
- Art is the expression of the soul. Creation in art is the evolution of the personality inspired by the urge for self-discovery.
- To see reality, you must rid yourself of all past customs and traditions.
- To pursue MU TAU effectively requires a probing mind and a determined spirit. Commit yourself wholeheartedly to the task at hand and such effort will lead you on the path of enlightenment.
- The teacher of MU TAU is not there for you to copy or mimic. He is merely a "guide" who stimulates progress through creative learning experiences. He can show you the path to truth but you must walk that path all by yourself. He can teach you to crawl but you must help yourself to walk.He can show you techniques but you must adapt to them. The student absorbs the ideas of the teacher and develops from there by depending on himself.
- Some martial artists are conformists, feeling a sense of security in mass imitation. In MU TAU, each pupil is a distinct individual and is treated as such. The movement of each will be somewhat similar and yet different just as their personalities, physical builds, and mannerisms will be.
- There is no challenge too great that man, the living, creating individual, can not conquer.
- The 'old' method of training demands an Oriental-way-of-life approach which lingers in feudal Asia and is inappropriate for the present. These ritual-oriented followers prefer to perpetuate the traditions of yesteryear rather than awakening themselves to the needs of today.
- Instead of kicking barefoot for the purposes of sport and etiquette, MU TAU insists upon the use of the shod foot in all phases of training to simulate actual combat conditions.
- Strict regimentation traps the soul; freedom of expression invigorates it.
- In the act of self-defense, the MU TAU-ist does not actually vanquish the antagonist; the opponent defeats himself.
- MU TAU is a psychophysical endeavor. It serves as an outlet for releasing one's internal aggressions while achieving the optimum of one's potential.
- Understanding MU TAU requires an openmindedness and a liberation from standards. You cannot possibly imprison MU TAU within the norm since, at best, it is simply a collection of ongoing ideas.
- Martial Truth permeates from self-expression, not bondage to a standardized system or confining style whose stringent laws and 'fixed' drills only inhibit one's original sense of freedom.
- The makeup of MU TAU is not saturated with superficialities and intricate gimmicks. Efficient basics, honed to their peak, form the nucleus of this practical combative art. Afterall, the simple way is the best way.
- The natural weapons of MU TAU are implements of

creative energy and controlled anger. They help to liberate the spirit and crush the hostilities both in front of you as well as within the soul.

- When you strike out with your fist or foot, do so with a piercing mind and a penetrating body-feel. Do not merely look or hit "at" the opposition; go "through" him.
- Seek knowledge from all sources and gain experience from constant practice. Regard MU TAU as a higher form of learning as well as a superior physical education.

THE FRAMEWORK OF MU TAU

Techniques

1) Well-braced ready position with the best hand and leg forward, in easier reach of their targets.
2) Elusive/Deceptive Mobility: The shifty bob/weave motion and light, loose shuffling footwork
   a. Movement to Defend (evasiveness)
   b. Movement to Attack (unpredictability)
3) The use of the leading hand and foot for most of the attack.
4) The use of offense as defense: fights are won by scoring, not passively blocking!!
5) Efficient techniques: short, fast moves based on simplicity and economy of motion. No wasted, complex movements, such as leaping or twisting-type kicks.
6) Totality: No partiality as to kicking over punching, hitting over grappling, straight lines over angles, etc. MU TAU utilizes ALL ways and means to engage the opposition.
7) Penetrating attacks: hit through the target, not just at it!!
8) The integrated execution of direct, indirect, and counter offensives.
9) Grappling maneuvers in close to control the opponent and to force into submission.
10) Biting and hairpulling in situations where all else fails!!
11) The perception of all possible ranges and angles of action.
12) No rigid, passive blocking. Defenses are in the form of parries and evasions.
13) The utilization of all lines and angles in both striking and kicking. Straight punching combined with compact, angular blows; straight-line and hooking kicks.
14) The use of body power rather than mere arm or leg action in hitting and kicking. Destructive force is generated from hips, leverage, and proper muscular contractions.
15) The emphasis on scoring efficiency in addition to good form.

Training

1) Realistic Combat Training (no rituals). The progressive analysis of self-defense through the eyes of an unrestrained 'street-fight' rather than in terms of sport or tournament play.
2) No "fixed" forms (kata) or prearranged routines. Learning is free and spontaneous, not mechanical!!
3) The constant honing of the physique and promotion of physical fitness through scientifically-selected exercise. Enhancement of mind and body simultaneously.
4) The continuous sharpening of the "tools" of the trade (kicks and punches) on various striking devices.
5) All-out sparring with full-contact and suitable protective gear.

Chapter 2

Technical Dynamics

Technical dynamics are the physical principles underlying MU TAU techniques. They include strength, speed, power, endurance, neuromuscular coordination, agility, balance, flexibility, timing, form, accuracy, and sensitivity.

STRENGTH

- Refers to the effort one can exert with a single maximal muscle contraction.
- Strength should always be developed first. Speed and endurance will develop more rapidly if strength is already established.
- The strength training program should always be tailored to the individual. Those devotees working on identical formats will not produce the same results.
- Gains in strength are influenced by several factors. Although the total amount of work load or resistance may be the same, many repetitions performed with a light weight will give far less strength gain than lifting a maximum or near-maximum weight but a few times.
- Strength is definitely an asset to a fighter, especially during close-range combat. Success in grappling is frequently due to a fighter's strength.
- Muscles become stronger only when they contract more forcefully than the levels to which they are commonly accustomed. The stimulus that results in muscular growth is the degree of tension in the fibers of the muscles. One means of increasing the level of tension is to increase the resistance against which muscles act. Weight training is the most popular resistive exercise method.
- Muscular strength can be improved by using less resistance but contracting the muscles faster. This technique, referred to as dynamic tension, also stimulates a gain in strength.

SPEED

- Refers to the rapidity with which successive movements can be executed, mentally as well as physically.
- Motion economy and relaxed muscles enhance speed. Wasted movements, overall tension, and unnecessary muscular contractions reduce speed and dissipate energy.
- Elements of speed are:
  1) Quickness of eye to spot openings
  2) Quickness of mind to select the right move at the right time
  3) Quickness of reflexive action to react to the task at hand
  4) Quickness of hand and foot in activating the chosen movement instantly and effectively
- Speed in hitting refers to how fast a blow covers distance to get to its target. It includes a sudden initiation and a maximum acceleration up to the last instant of contact. The final snap of the elbow-joint when striking and the knee-joint in kicking is employed at the peak of the movement. Regardless of the distance to travel, the final phase of hitting action should be the fastest.
- Speed blends movement time with reaction time. The faster one can recognize and respond to a certain situation, the swifter his physical actions are likely to be.
- Speed is closely allied to timing. Thus, the ability to perceive the right moment and seize the opportunity for an offensive or defensive action is the secret of rapid attacks and evasions.
- When the response time is shortened so that the time gap between a stimulus and the conditioned reflex action is minimal, the speed in delivering a stroke will show a crisp increase.
- Quick hitting is the aim. In no way should speed be sacrificed for power.
- Speed is instantaneous and without hesitation. Any

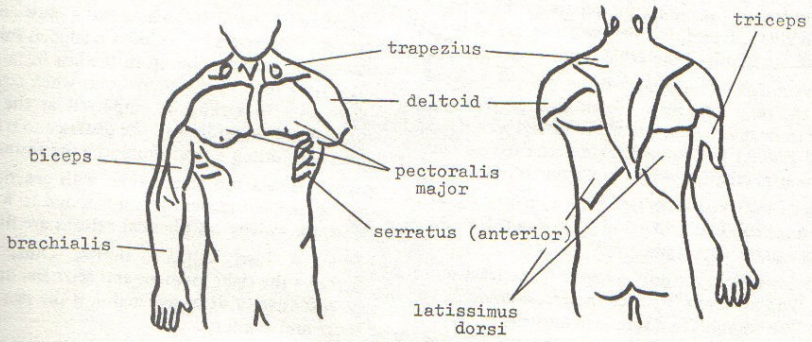
deliberation at all in one's moves will definitely serve as detrimental to speed potential.

- The speed of a punch depends largely on correct muscle movement. When the arm is stretched during the course of a punch, one group of arm muscles stretches while another contracts. Proper balance must prevail between these two muscle groups for a swift, effective punch. If, for example, the muscles which must stretch are tensed, the arm movement will lack smoothness and the punch will be slow.

POWER

- Is a combination of both strength and speed. It implies the ability to develop fast, explosive movements against resistance.
- Since power equals force times speed, one who learns to exert his strength quickly will increase his power. A fast swing by a small man may hit as hard if not harder than a slow swing by a heavyweight.
- Hitting with power requires that the fighter thrust his body weight behind every blow. The momentum with which he can drive forth incorporated with the application of significant muscle fibers make the best use of available power.
- Power is also dependent on leverage and precision. Leverage supplies the mechanical advantage for a forceful blow by positioning the body in such a way that full body weight is driven at the target. Precision, on the other hand, means exactness (accuracy) in the projection of a force. Unless one's blows are accurate, his power will never be realized. In other words, a fighter may have the strongest punch or kick in the world but if he cannot hit with it squarely it is useless.
- Power is enforced by tensing the working muscles at the moment of impact and not a second before.
- Possessing muscular strength alone will not enable one to excel in martial arts or, for that matter, any form of athletics. The effective use of strength is important. The application of power in physical movements depends on several factors, the most important being speed.
- Power is not brute strength or exerting more effort than is required. It is the ability to hurl one's whole body behind a blow while moving in at full speed and with the body in the right position.
- A kick or punch will be weak if applied with the arm or leg alone. To achieve maximum power it is necessary to hit with the entire body. When hitting or kicking, power moves the center of the body, the major muscles, to the extremities, ending in the hand or foot. This power moves from one part of the body to the next at fantastic speed. Training should be conducted so that all available strength is focused in the foot when kicking or in the hand when punching.
- It is important that the various muscles and tendons are kept loose and relaxed prior to impact. If the muscles are already tense, they cannot be further tensed when contact is made. Tightening up either too early or too late will lessen hitting force.

THE ANATOMY OF A PUNCH



—MAJOR MUSCLE GROUPS APPLIED—

- A punch is thrusted at the target by stretching the arm smoothly and rapidly toward it. Release all unnecessary tension from the arm and hand at the start, but be sure to concentrate all the power of the body in the punching fist at the moment of impact. Make use of the reservoir of power stored in the hips as you initiate your punch. This power flows through, and is increased by the muscles of the chest, shoulder, upper arm, and forearm.
- An effective attack is produced by a concentrated blast of power at the moment of impact.
- Power to move the body is supplied by the muscles. Well-trained, powerful, and elastic muscles are mandatory in fighting. Even if one is well-versed in hitting theory and understands the principles of the dynamics of movement, his techniques will be weak if his muscles are not strong enough. Therefore, constant training is necessary to strengthen the muscles of the body.
- The speed with which the muscles are contracted is another crucial factor because the faster a muscle is tensed the greater will be the power produced.
- Power can be concentrated only when the proper muscles are firmly linked and function fully.
- An essential element to remember is that greater power can be generated when the blow travels a longer route to its target. In kicking, for example, the longer the distance that the leg travels to the target, the more powerful the kick will be.
- The formidable shocking power of a kick or punch results from the momentum generated by the movements of various parts of the body, climaxed by a focus of these components at the instant of contact with the target.
- In order to cultivate power, it is wise practice to hit moving targets that offer resistance. Such practice, together with a comprehension and application of the dynamics of movement will promote hitting efficiency.
- The destructive force of a kick or punch is generated by turning the body into the blow which is made possible by rotating the waist and hips. In punching, the smooth, swift, and level twist of the waist is essential to the application of power. You cannot throw an effective punch with arm and shoulder strength alone!!
- An effective kick cannot be applied with the power of the leg alone either. To kick effectively, a springing motion of the hips must be added to the power of the leg. Push the hips toward the target as the leg drives out and immediately withdraw them again as the leg is retracted.
- The turn of the waist and hips produces the driving power necessary for strong techniques. Therefore, a great deal of practice must go into developing good hip movements, even at the expense of practice in arm and leg movements.
- By thrusting the hips forward and at the same time taking a step ahead, it is possible to launch a powerful attack. Also, after the delivery of a punch or kick, this inward movement affords the opportunity to press the attack, following up the initial blow quickly. A successful attack depends very much on the forceful and speedy forward thrust of the hips.
- Thrusting the hips forward differs from merely stepping forward. For maximum effects, the body must be propelled forth. To accomplish this, one moves out with the driving power of the rear leg. The body is driven inward by the reaction which occurs when the weight of the body shifts from the rear foot to the lead foot. The speed with which the body moves forward is in direct proportion to the thrust of the lead leg against the ground. The greater the reaction of the ground against the thrust of the foot, the faster and stronger the attack.
- If the hips are correctly thrust forward, power travels through the leg from the ground to the hips. From the hips it continues to the back muscles, the shoulder, and through the arm to terminate ultimately in the fist. To transmit this power effectively from the hips to the arm, a tight connection must exist between the hips and the upper body.
- Applying certain kinesiological principles to one's hitting techniques enhances the actual force exerted. In order to gain maximum striking power, there are various principles of the physical anatomy of a punch that the practitioner must be fully aware of.
- The body mechanisms for movement are bones and muscles. The bones are moved by approximately 270-million striated muscles. There are certain muscle groups that should be employed to attain maximum punching impact and there are certain muscles that should be relaxed to aid this process. The timing of the use of these muscles determines the type of motion that results.
- For the purpose of hitting, the muscles responsible for moving the bones are classified as either agonists or antagonists. For example, the biceps are muscles used in pulling. The action of the triceps is that of pushing. Thus, in pulling, the biceps are the agonists and the triceps become the potential antagonists. In pushing (which involves the same action of the muscles as in punching), the opposite is true.
- The following muscle groups have been found to measure a great degree of activity in the majority of punches utilized in MU TAU:

1—Shoulder Joint Muscles
pectoralis major, deltoids, latissimus dorsi

2—Shoulder Girdle Muscles
serratus anterior, trapezius

3—Elbow Joint Muscles
brachialis, triceps, biceps

Although there is no tension in these muscle areas before impact, every muscle covered is tensed at the point of contact with the target.

- The ideal situation is to have different methods of striking for different occasions and different needs. In other words, a MU TAU punch must be effective both in actual hitting power as well as a means of exercise and physical development.

ENDURANCE

- Is the capability of the body to resist fatigue while performing a prolonged, relatively strenuous activity. It involves a number of elements, each of which is partially responsible for success or failure in sustaining physical performance.
- Training or conditioning builds a given economy—an efficiency in body adaptability—very important as the body adjusts to the continued and prolonged stresses put upon it in going all-out over a considerable time lapse. As a result of careful conditioning, the onset of fatigue is considerably delayed and the athlete is able to maintain a high rate of performance over a long period of time.
- Exercises for endurance improve muscle tone. This is caused primarily by the function of more motor units as a result of work increase.
- There are actually two distinct types of endurance: muscular endurance and cardiovascular endurance.
- Muscular endurance is the physical quality that enables one to persist in localized muscle group activities for extended periods of time. The specific muscles applied in combat movements must be trained properly and continuously to build resistance to fatigue.
- As a muscle tires, it loses some of its ability to relax. The character of a muscle is indicated not only by its ability to generate power over a protracted time span but also by its elasticity maintenance. As the muscle works, it restores its own oxygen and fuel while disposing of lactic acid and other metabolic products. As long as these two processes operate at a similar rate, the muscle can continue to work efficiently. However, when an imbalance sets in where the rate of waste product accumulation is greater than the oxygen and fuel intake, physiological equilibrium (homeostasis) is upset and fatigue occurs. This naturally slows reaction time and presents a stiffness of the muscle, preventing it from reaching a state of relaxation.
- Cardiovascular endurance is the quality of the heart, lungs, and circulatory system to function effectively for prolonged time spans.
- Physical training develops endurance by increasing the efficiency of the heart and circulatory system. The heart is a muscle and, like any other muscle, with exercise it tends to increase in efficiency and size. An athlete's heart beat is slower and stronger than that of a non-athlete. It has the ability to pump through the blood stream the necessary oxygen and fuel to the muscles.
- Training also increases the capacity of the lungs which in turn supplies the blood with larger amounts of oxygen to eliminate waste products. Strong lungs together with a strong heart increase the ability of the muscles to operate in such a way that they can contract over and over without fatigue. This is the type of endurance needed in fighting. It can be developed only through daily exercise and hard work.
- Developing considerable respiratory capacity adds to the total performance of an athlete. The best form of endurance exercise is the actual doing of the activity itself. One must be willing to drive himself hard, punishing his body and then resting adequately, only to increase the output of effort after the rest.
- An effective procedure for bettering one's wind is to mix periods of full-speed, all-out efforts with milder activity time-intervals.
- Any exercise designed to improve and maintain cardiovascular endurance should involve the large musculature of the lower limbs. This is esential since the lower limb musculature acts as an auxiliary pump for the heart. As such, exercises such as running, shadow-kicking, jumping squats, and rope-jumping should be included in the fighter's training program.
- Exercises for promoting cardiovascular endurance should be increased gradually. If one ceases to maintain a rigorous pace, endurance will decline rapidly.

NEUROMUSCULAR COORDINATION

- Refers to the interaction between the body's nervous and muscular system. This harmonious function is essential for producing skilled movements.
- Coordination involves the blending of forceful and explosive movements with accurate and less forceful movements and the sequential blending of different movements to achieve some purposeful action.
- Coordination is of the most importance in any study of proficiency in the field of athletics. It is the quality which enables the individual to integrate all the powers and capacities of his entire organism into an effective doing of a task.
- The well-coordinated fighter performs his techniques smoothly and gracefully. He makes purposeful moves with a minimum of effort and a maximum of speed and power.
- Efficient movement is a matter of training the nervous system to send impulses to certain muscles, causing these muscles to contract while halting impulses to the antagonistic muscles simultaneously, allowing them to relax. Properly coordinated impulses surge with the exact intensity required to achieve skill.
- The nervous system is involved not only in initiating, coordinating, and directing activity but also is largely responsible for producing the necessary adjustment in body functions to make the exercise or movement posible.
- Some portions of the nervous system and their functions are:

  (a) Cerebrum—sensations, voluntary movements, memory of skills, judgment, all conscious functions
  (b) Thalamus—complex reflex actions, perception of sensations
  (c) Hypothalamus—coordination of autonomic functions (not under conscious control of the individual), control of body temperature

(d) Cerebellum—coordination of skilled movements, maintenance of equilibrium through action on skeletal muscles (necessary for smooth and effective movements)

(e) Medulla Oblongata — contains reflex centers that regulate heart rate, blood pressure, and respiratory rate and depth.

- We learn solely by doing. By forming proper connections in the nervous system through steady practice and strengthening them with each performance of an act, we attain skill. The more familiar we are with the action, the easier and more readily accomplished it will be.
- One is capable of perceiving various actions due to the sensory nerves having been excited by external stimuli and the resulting excitement being carried up to the sensory nerve center in the cerebrum.
- We are able to make our bodies move because the muscles contract to pull the bones to which they are attached at the joints. The messages produced in the sensory area of the brain are carried through the vertebrae to the motor nerves running minutely through the muscles. The motor nerves there cause the proper muscles to contract. Quick, efficient movements are the result of the speed with which the process takes place.
- Coordination will be impaired if the athlete attempts finely skilled moves when he is tired. Fine skills are to be practiced only while one is fresh.

AGILITY

- Is the ability to quickly and nimbly change the direction of the movement of the body. Is actually a type of physical speed.
- An agile athlete is quick, dextrous, and easy in moving. He is also mentally alert and portrays a superior use of body mechanics with a "lively" overall awareness.
- Agility is enhanced by a pulsating rhythm from head to toe and the ability to feel muscle contraction and relaxation.
- Relaxation refers to the degree of tension in the musculature. Although muscles are always in a slight state of tension (as they should be), tightening up too much will handicap our agility. Tense antagonistic muscles waste energy and cause stiffness and/or resistance to movement. In agile movements, the opposing muscles must be able to relax and lengthen readily and easily.
- Flexibility, timing, and balance are prerequisites of agile body functions. therefore, a relaxed neuromuscular perception must accompany all fighting movements. This can be achieved only through daily practice of economical actions and reactions.

BALANCE

- Refers to one's competence in maintaining his equilibrium. It is the all-important factor in a fighter's stance during moving, attacking, and defending.
- Balance is the control of one's center of gravity and utilization of slanting the body for various kicks and hits. It must be perfectly maintained at all times.
- Slanting the body during kicks is often counter-balanced with an extended arm.
- In grappling, balance is essential for taking advantage of an opponent's weight distribution and gaining leverage once he has been taken down.
- Balance must be studied in motion, not in stillness.
- For attacking, the center of gravity should be shifted to the front foot in order that the full weight of the body will be transmitted behind each blow. Defensively, the center of gravity should be shifted slightly to the rear foot so that the distance is increased and more time is allotted for the parry and/or evasion.
- Always stay balanced for follow-up movements. Be careful of too much commitment in both attack and defense (especially in 'driving' punches).
- If the feet are placed far apart, with a consequent lowering of the center of gravity, a kick or punch will be stronger. However, it is easier and much faster to move if the center of gravity is somewhat higher and the feet closer together. Therefore, although stability is important, there is a point beyond which it is not worth going. If one is overly concerned with stability, he will lose elasticity and elusive motion. If he bends his knees too much to maintain balance, his kick will be poor. Thus, the position of the body and, consequently, the center of gravity must attain a point at which the techniques will be both strong and fast.
- The center of gravity is always shifting. Sometimes body weight is evenly distributed between both feet and sometimes there is more on one foot than the other. In kicking, for example, the weight is completely shifted to one foot. One must stand firmly on one leg, otherwise the shock of delivering the kick will upset his balance.
- Stability is especially important in kicking because the base area is limited to the sole of the supporting foot. Furthermore, the whole body is in motion during a kick, creating a shift in the center of gravity. To maintain stability under these circumstances, one must fully utilize the spring-like shock and movement-absorbing ability of the leg and the hips. The object is to keep the center of gravity within the base area.
- Kicks are often delivered with the heel of the supporting foot raised. Although this action adds height to the kick, it further reduces the base area. To maintain balance under such circumstances requires great tension in the muscles of the abdomen and legs. This position, if continuously maintained, requires much energy to control the nerves and muscles.
- Since the body moves around attacking and defending, it is obvious that the center of gravity will often deviate from the base area. However, if the amount of deviation is fairly small, various sensitive organs and muscles will automatically react to return the body to a balanced position. This sensitivity is better developed in a more skillful fighter, who can recover from a greater degree of deviation.

- Lowering the center of gravity adds to stability. However, if the knee of the supporting leg is excessively bent when kicking, the attack will lack sharpness and be of limited range. Nevertheless, under certain circumstances it is useful to kick from a low position.

FLEXIBILITY

- Is the range of possible motion in a joint or series of joints. Flexibility is specific to given joints and is actually more dependent upon the musculature surrounding a joint itself.
- The strong, muscular athlete may have extreme flexibility in all major joints. Strength and flexibility are independent of each other. Strength involves the state of contractile tissue within the muscle whereas flexibility involves the status of the non-contractile tissue surrounding the muscle fiber as well as in the joint involved. Therefore, judicious stretching to develop flexibility cannot impede strength development. Conversely, strength development will not have a detrimental effect on flexibility providing the individual works through a full range of motion.
- To avoid possible injury during flexibility exercises, the athlete should stretch slowly to his limit. This slow stretch should be continued beyond the individual's tolerance point for pain.
- It is beneficial to precede flexibility exercises with endurance training. The rationale for this lies in the assumption that flexibility improves when there is an elevation in the internal temperature of the body. A temperature rise is a common bodily adaptation which results from endurance exercise.
- All high kicking requires flexible legs as well as a supple back and waist region.
- Flexibility contributes to better athletic performance and decreases the risk of injury.
- Exercises for the acquisition of great muscular size such as is sought by some weight lifters without the use of accompanying movements designed to maintain and increase the range of joint motion, can and will result in the condition known as "muscle-bound". In this condition, due to the enormous bulk of the muscles, tendons, and ligaments and their inelasticity, there is a definite inability to obtain complete flexibility and freedom of joint mobility.
- All flexibility exercises improve the range of movement in various body parts if the athlete exerts significant tension on the ligaments.
- The very flexible martial artist is able to perform the more physically-demanding movements with greater ease and greater speed.

TIMING

- Is the sudden reaction (response) to a stimulus. It includes the ability to realize the right moment for executing an action.
- Timing is best exemplified by a movement that is initiated without obvious preparation and proceeds smoothly without deliberation such that it succeeds in hitting the opponent before he is alerted and has a chance to defend.
- Types of timing:
  (a) reaction time (b) movement time
  (c) countering time
- Reaction time is affected immensely by one's psychological and physiological conditions. Being properly warmed up also has some influence.
- Movement time is the time taken to perform a single arm movement, leg movement, or foot manipulation. Such time varies according to the speed of each individual fighter.
- The exact moment of making an action must be seized instinctively. For example, a blow should be made when the opponent's concentration is misdirected or when he is not paying careful attention to the moment.
- Timing a blow is the secret of powerful hitting. A good fighter will attempt to beat his opponent to the punch by taking the initiative and forcing the reaction of his foe. This is best accomplished by hitting the rival as he moves in, is lured into moving in, or as he prepares to make an attack.
- Speed, both physically and mentally, is the essence of timing. When applied at the opportune moment, speed, together with shrewd judgment, will ensure the success of a strike.
- Timing is unpredictability. We must surprise our adversary and catch him at a moment of helplessness. Psychologically, the moment of surprise and, physically, the moment of helplessness are the right moments to attack. This is the true conception of timing—sensing the exact moment of weakness in an opponent and catching him off-guard.
- When at long range from your rival, you must attack him as he readies his own attack since, at this distance, all offensive moves require some sort of preliminary preparation.
- To time an interception of the opponent's attack means to correctly anticipate and accurately place a hit at the same time he is making an attack.
- A well-timed interception stops the opponent in his tracks, arresting the development of his attack. It is used as he steps forward to punch or kick, when he is preoccupied with distractive moves, or between the motions of a complicated combination or flurry.
- Interceptions, usually made with a straight thrust or kick, must be employed with due regard to exact timing and correct distance.
- Intercepting is an excellent means of defensive hitting against an opponent who attacks wildly and exposes his advanced body parts. It is also effective against the antagonist who comes too close.
- An excellent moment to launch an attack is when the opponent is preparing an attack. His intention will be momentarily concentrated more on attack than defense.

- The success of countering largely depends on concealing one's real intentions and inducing the opponent to commit himself to an attack so that he has little chance to recover upon completion.
- Counter-time requires that you immediately take the offensive once the opponent's blow has missed and is withdrawn to his body.
- If timing is faulty, the technique, be it offensive, or defensive, will fail to gain its objective. A kick or punch which is directed at the target either too early or too late will miss the score. A parry which is mistimed could allow the opponent's attack to get through and land solidly.
- The initiation, or start of a technique, is of first importance in the consideration of timing. Unlike baseball players or golfers who take practice swings to start their particular movements, the fighter must react in an instant. A failure in timing could be disastrous.
- An attack must be delivered suddenly with the hands and feet from the usual position of readiness. Obviously, the hands and feet must always be placed so that hitting and kicking can be easily and quickly applied. Immediately after the application of a technique, they must be returned to their original position, ready for the following movement. Moreover, during the course of these movements the body must be kept relaxed but alert, with the muscles full of energy and ready for any eventuality.

FORM

- Effective fighting techniques depend on correct form. It takes much diligent practice to develop sharp, flawless body movement. All parts of the body must synchronize and harmonize to provide maximum efficiency in the execution of a kick or strike.
- Efficient form refers to graceful but sound, well-coordinated body mechanics performed with a minimum of lost motion and wasted energy.
- A key to good form is fluidity. All movements flow smoothly and naturally from one into the next without any hesitation or deliberation in between.
- Good form precedes speed and power in techniques. Before a real fast, powerful blow or kick can be developed, one must master the fundamental manipulations of the movement.
- If the form of a technique is poor, the qualities of speed, power, and timing will be lacking.
- Good form not only deals with the execution of a technique but with the smooth recovery as well.

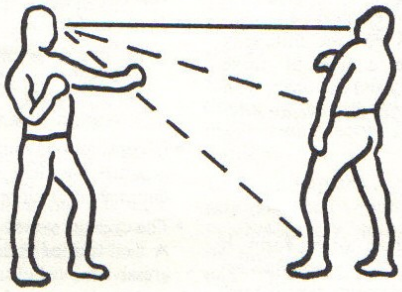
ACCURACY

- Is the quality of exactness in the projection of a force.
- No matter how potentially powerful or destructive one's blow, it will be ineffective unless it is accurate.
- Always have a target in mind and aim for it!!
- Be familiar with areas of the body that are vulnerable and cause pain or unconsciousness when struck.
- Practice striking small, moving objects to develop precision in your blows and kicks.
- Speed is essential to accuracy since you must hit out at the target during the short time that it is open to you.

SENSITIVITY

- Besides promoting fitness, training in the martial arts increases our overall awareness by developing our main senses for fighting—sight, hearing, and touch.
- Sharpened eyesight (visual perception) gives us a better perspective with regard to gauging distance, finding openings upon which to score, and being responsive to aggressive actions and moves.
- Types of focusing:
  (a) Central Vision—eyes and attention are fixed on one point
  (b) Peripheral Vision—eyes fixed on one point as attention expands to a greater area
- In combat, one must focus both centrally and peripherally since the field of vision is enlarged from afar and diminished at close range.
- The eyes are your best receivers of action and movement. A well-trained fighter can use his eyes to detect an aggressive move before its maximum range of damage. This is done by observing the specific zone according to the distance between the fighters. The practitioner must make full use of his peripheral vision so that his attention spans the opponent's entire body.
- Since, in total fighting, both hands and legs are employed, the best way to clue an action by the opponent is to watch his high zone (eyes, shoulders) at long range and either his middle or lower zone in close. By observing the direction of the shoulders from afar, you are able to perceive most any blow or kick. If they move up or down, left or right, they actually inform you of a hand or foot movement (be careful of feints). In close, your vision should centralize on either the feet, waist, or chest of your foe. Looking any higher than this will expose your face and throat to attack.
- Be careful never to lose sight of the adversary by blinking, flinching, or looking away. These common errors often interfere with one's opportunities to enact a clear shot, and can leave you temporarily blinded and open to attack.
- Trained hearing (audio perception) will assist us in areas which our peripheral vision cannot encompass. With years of adequate experience, auditory sensitivity can be developed to the point where one can actually anticipate an unseen, surprise action.

- A keener sense of feel (tactile perception) is helpful at close combat in uncovering vital spots and pressure points. It is also an integral part of immobilizing the use of an opponent's limbs.
- Increased perception enhances reaction time. For example, when one can seen an opening quicker, he can ready and execute the appropriate attack quicker. Also, when one's sense of touch is of a high calibre, he is more apt to react to any feeling of overcommitment by the opponent during an immobilization. As such, he can quickly complement the resistant force and land a hit to the unprotected zone.
- One's powers of concentration are imperative to sensory perception. The fighter must have a pliable mental awareness of his opponent at all times. His attention must not flag. He should compel himself to concentrate fully on the moment of action.
- A relaxed state of mind reinforces the three senses. Losing one's cool and becoming emotionally tense will dull sensitivity



The Fighter's Visual Field

a) Enlarged at long range

eyes focused on high zone yet still able to clue hand or foot motions peripherally

b) Diminished at close range

Visual Perception

Chapter 3

Basic Techniques

Basic techniques in MU TAU are those fundamentals that lead up to the study of offense and defense. The basics are the strong foundation upon which this martial art is based. They include the position of readiness, mobility, and distancing.

POSITION OF READINESS

The early Greek pugilist's fighting pose was that of the classic right-hander, with the left shoulder forward to protect the chin, the left hand extended, and the right hand back to inflict the greatest damage. The distance between the feet was wide, lowering the center of gravity for better solidarity and hitting power. This upright, well-braced posture represented the good body and good mind of the seasoned combatant. Later, in the process of change and refinement, this position would be altered according to the ideas of the leading champions and practitioners of the art.

The modern position of the MU TAU-ist is similar to that of a fast moving but hard hitting western boxer. It features a semi-crouch stance, providing a sturdy but comfortably balanced position to attack and defend without any forewarning movements. It allows complete ease and relaxation as well as speed and power.

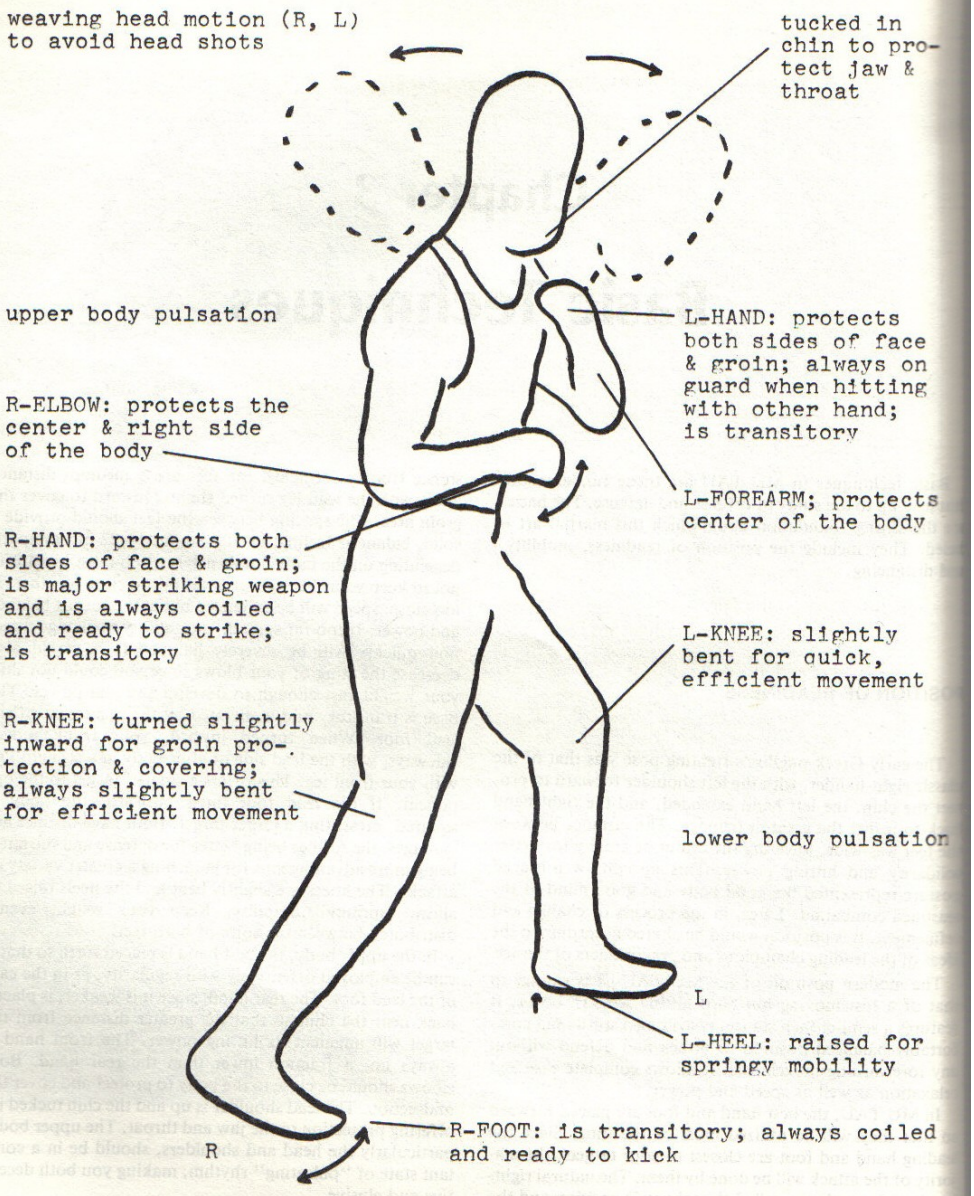
In MU TAU, the best hand and foot are placed forward so that they will be utilized most of the time. Since the leading hand and foot are closest to your targets, the majority of the attack will be done by them. The natural right-hander adopts the so-called "southpaw" position and the left-hander takes the "orthodox" pose.

Proper positioning of the feet, arms, and head is imperative to your attacking and defensive skills. In the basic stance (foot placement), the feet are a medium distance apart with the lead leg turned slightly inward to cover the groin area. The spacing between the feet should provide a solid, balanced feeling; ideally, about 14–22 inches apart, depending on the individual's height. You must be careful not to keep your feet too far apart or too close together. If too close, speed will be enhanced but at the cost of balance and power. If too far spread, your ability to change direction quickly will be severely hampered. It would also decrease the sting of your blows since you could not shift your weight fast enough to develop any real power. The base is transitory and is dictated by the placement of the lead foot. When turned inward, your trunk moves sideways, with the lead side of your body in a straight line with your front leg. This offers a smaller target to the opponent. If the lead foot turns outward, the body is squared, presenting a larger target. Both have distinct advantages, the former being better for defense and the latter being more advantageous for launching a greater variety of attacks. The knees are slightly bent and the heels raised to allow "springy" mobility. Keep your weight evenly distributed between the soles of both feet.

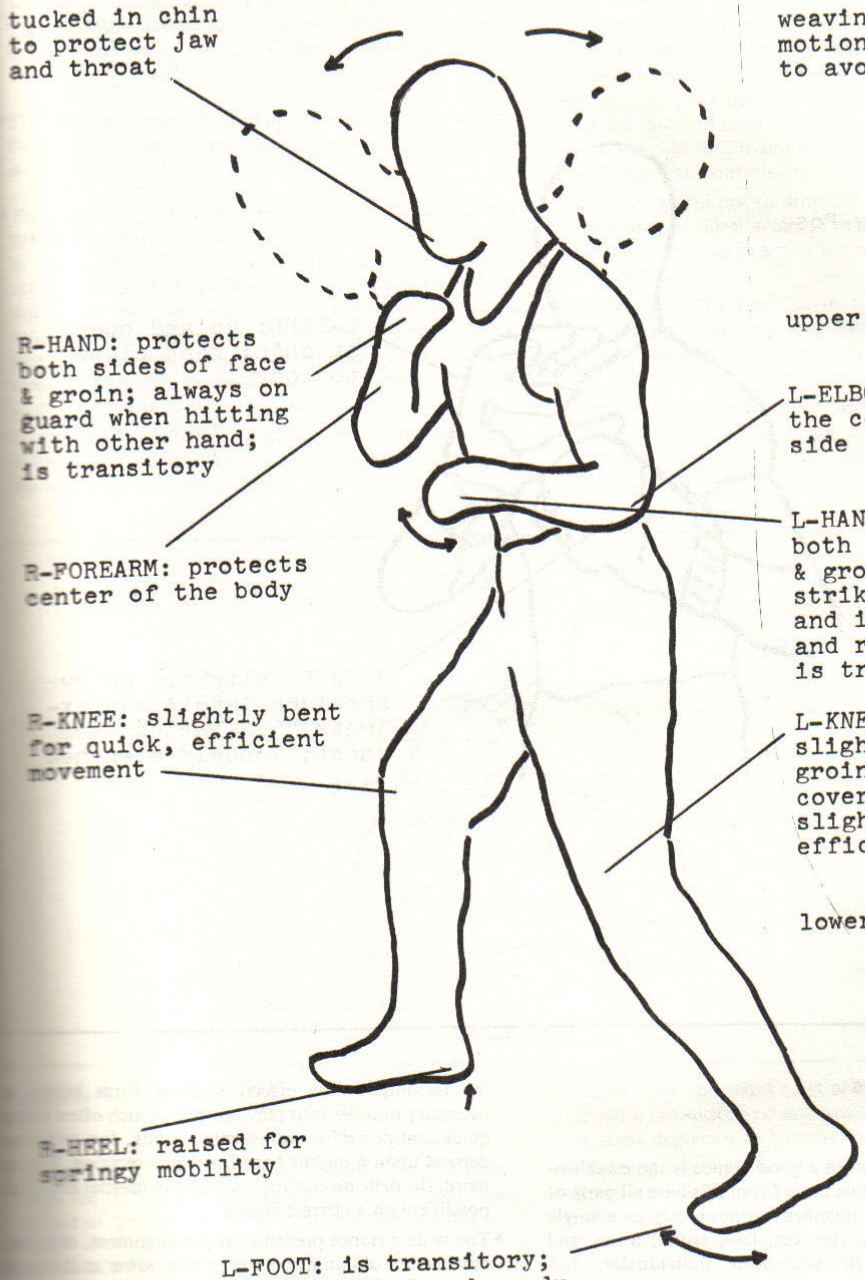
In the upper body, the best hand is placed forth so that it can be employed offensively with regularity, as in the case of the lead foot. The rear hand, since it is weaker, is placed back near the chin so that the greater distance from the target will augment its hitting power. The front hand is always up, a fraction lower than the rear hand. Both elbows should be close to the body to protect and cover the midsection. The lead shoulder is up and the chin tucked in, offering protection to the jaw and throat. The upper body, particularly the head and shoulders, should be in a constant state of "pulsating" rhythm, making you both deceptive and elusive.

The ready position described allows the fighter to move fast, effectively, and with versatility. It is the starting point for both defense and attack.

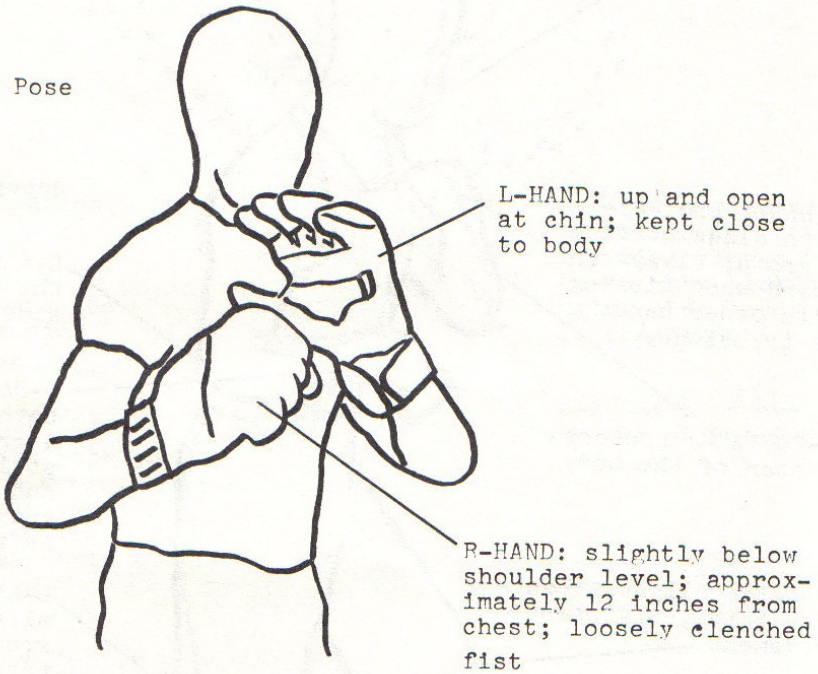
SOUTHPAW POSITION


weaving head motion (R, L) to avoid head shots
tucked in chin to protect jaw & throat
upper body pulsation
L-HAND: protects both sides of face & groin; always on guard when hitting with other hand; is transitory
R-ELBOW: protects the center & right side of the body
L-FOREARM; protects center of the body
R-HAND: protects both sides of face & groin; is major striking weapon and is always coiled and ready to strike; is transitory
L-KNEE: slightly bent for quick, efficient movement
R-KNEE: turned slightly inward for groin protection & covering; always slightly bent for efficient movement
lower body pulsation
L
L-HEEL: raised for springy mobility
R-FOOT: is transitory; always coiled and ready to kick
R

ORTHODOX POSITION



HAND PLACEMENT

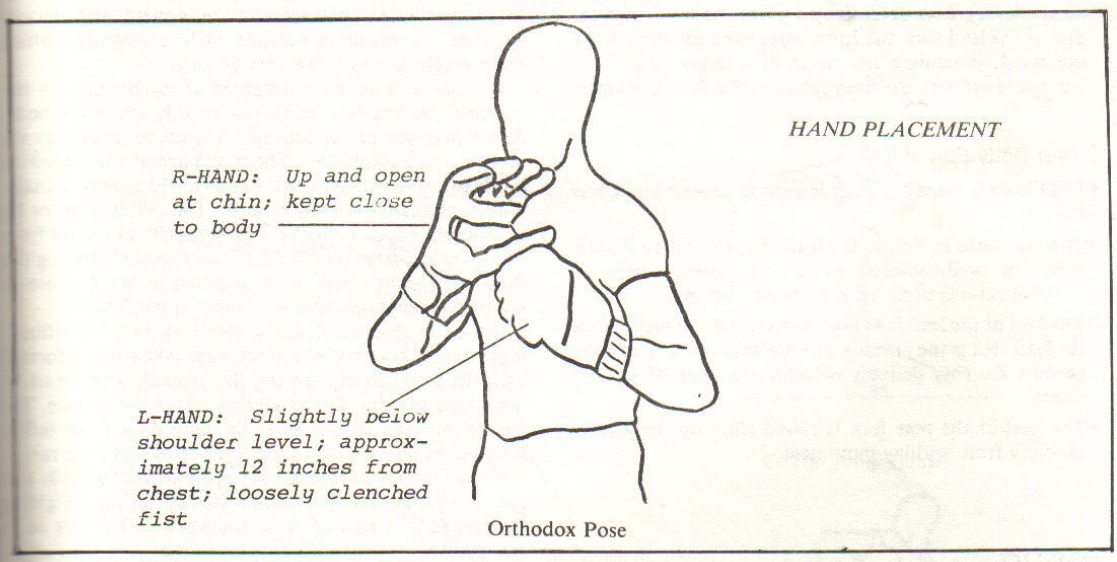

Southpaw Pose
L-HAND: up and open at chin; kept close to body
R-HAND: slightly below shoulder level; approximately 12 inches from chest; loosely clenched fist

Some Considerations

- The first consideration in a good stance is the establishment of a strong, mobile base. From this base all parts of the body must work together harmoniously as a single unit. In other words, the feet, legs, trunk, arms, and hands must be well controlled individually, but simultaneously work together as a unit.
- It is important that the muscles necessary to perform a particular technique respond fully, and that those not used be kept relaxed. If a stance is incorrect, the harmonious interaction of your muscles will be absent and the techniques less effective. Poor form brings unnecessary muscles into play, muscles which often hamper quick and powerful movements. Strong, fast techniques depend upon a mobile base for their execution. Furthermore, the delicate control necessary in martial arts is only possible with a correct stance.
- Too wide a stance prevents proper alignment, destroying balance but obtaining solidarity and power at the cost of speed and efficient movement. A short stance in which the feet are close together increases speed and quick moves but prevents balance and lessens power.
- A proper stance is one which keeps the feet always directly under the body meaning that the feet should be

medium distance apart. Either the weight is balanced over both legs or shifted to one of them (i.e. slightly forward in punching and back when kicking). This position permits relaxation, speed, balance, and easy maneuvering as well as technical efficiency, making possible tremendous power.

- The stance varies according to the circumstances. However, it must be natural and it must allow one to move freely in all directions.
- There is an important difference between the stance as a preparation for applying a technique and the same stance at the actual moment of application. In the former instance the knees of both legs are slightly bent and the muscles in the thighs and calves of both legs are relaxed to permit quick and nimble movement. However, the instant a technique is applied, the muscles of the legs must tense to strengthen the hold of the feet on the ground and to supply power to the movement.
- In addition to mobility, the stance must provide enough strength and firmness to withstand the shock caused by the application of techniques.
- Keep the muscles of the body relaxed. Apply muscle tension only when delivering a blow. Learn to relax, when not attacking, in order to conserve energy.
- The weight of the forearms is not to be carried by the muscles but should rest, for the most part, on the leverage provided by the hinges of the elbows.
- Never hold the hands too high in hopes of tightly guarding the face and head. Such a peek-aboo defense will expose the midsection and lower targets while possibly interfering with your vision.
- Also be careful not to drop the arms too low or dangle them to your sides. When in range this is certain suicide. Keep the arms up in a position which allows efficient attack and defense.
- Do not hold the lead fist in a tight, rigid, motionless state. Keep it moving (but without exaggeration) in a threatening manner to keep the opponent busy. A punch can be delivered faster from motion than from solidarity.
- The fighter's vision should be focused on the eyes or chest of the rival, depending on the distance. This will train the eyes to immediately detect the start of an opponent's blow.


HAND PLACEMENT
R-HAND: Up and open at chin; kept close to body
L-HAND: Slightly below shoulder level; approximately 12 inches from chest; loosely clenched fist
Orthodox Pose

Fundamentals of Form

- Strongest hand and leg placed forward. If righthanded, place the right arm/right leg up front. This maximizes the use of the lead weapons for hitting and kicking.

Upper Body Functions

- The lead hand protects both sides of the face and the groin. Since it is also the major striking weapon, the lead hand position varies continuously from the center of the chest to a point at shoulder height and as far to the outside of the lead shoulder as possible without raising the elbow. The lead hand must always be relaxed and loose (as with the entire lead arm and shoulder) and constantly in some degree of motion for easy, snappy initiation.
- The rear hand protects both sides of the face and the groin. Since it is the major guarding instrument, the open palm of the rear hand faces the opponent in readiness for his attacks and counters. It should be placed at chin level and a few inches from your rear shoulder. The rear hand may also be used to attack in a punching flurry or combination and, as such, should be instantly ready to hit out as well as defend.
- Elbows tucked in tight for maximum protection of the midsection. Lead elbow protects the center and lead side

of the body; Rear elbow protects the rear side of the body (short ribs).

- The lead shoulder is positioned slightly higher than the rear shoulder. When you move into action, the raised lead shoulder serves to protect your chin.
- The rear forearm protects the center of the body.
- Evasive head motion for avoiding head shots as well as for deceptive purposes in launching attacks.
- The chin is tucked in and down to guard the throat. It is not tucked behind the lead shoulder except in an extreme defensive position. Tucking the chin into the lead shoulder turns the neck into an unnatural position, limits the support of the muscles, and prevents straight bone alignment. It also tenses the lead shoulder and arm, preventing free movement and causing fatigue. The best possible alignment of the muscles and bone structure is with the chin dropped directly forward and pinned to the breastbone. This exposes only the top of the head to the opponent making it impossible to be struck on the point of the chin where most knockouts are registered.
- The position of the trunk is controlled mainly by that of the leading foot and leg. An inward turn of the lead foot and leg rotates the body in the same direction presenting a narrow target for defensive purposes. An outward rotation of the lead foot and leg squares the body toward the opponent, presenting somewhat of a larger target area but also a versatile position for several effective attacks.

Lower Body Functions

- Lead knee is turned slightly inward to protect and cover the groin.
- The rear knee as well as the lead knee should be slightly bent for well-balanced positioning from which all physical actions occur without prior warning.
- The heel of the lead foot is turned slightly outward. Since the lead foot is the primary kicking weapon, this position permits the easy delivery of most any type of kick or sweep.
- The heel of the rear foot is raised allowing for greater mobility from springy movement.

MOBILITY

The way of fighting is combat in motion. Therefore, a good martial artist must not assume the stiff, rigid posture of a corpse but must move, not simply for the sake of moving, but to provide a difficult target to hit and an unpredictable offense.

Much of the mobility in MU TAU is of a loose, relaxed nature set off by a pulsating rhythm in the feet, shoulders, and head. Such movement enables the fighter to dart in and out quickly and has a mesmerizing effect on the opponent. It instills a deceptive flow in both defense and attack.

Technically, MU TAU mobility is of two types: footwork (lower body mobility) and bobbing and weaving (upper body mobility). Both are essential to total combat, having distinct advantages at certain ranges of action.

Footwork

Footwork is a manipulation of the feet used to move the body into the most advantageous position for defense and attack. Knowing when, where, and how to move the feet is the key to most combat skills. One must coordinate and synchronize, in a smooth and efficient manner, the movement of the feet and hands.

In ancient times, the pankratiast's footwork lacked mobility. Since it was a sign of cowardice to retreat from one's opponent, most of the action was waged toe to toe. Today, however, the essence of scientific fighting is the art of moving: moving in to attack and moving out to defend or pull off balance. The ability to move at the right time is the foundation of great fighting skill.

Footwork does not mean jumping around. It means moving just enough to accomplish a purpose, in order to make an opponent miss or deliver a counterblow effectively. It also infers balance—but movement and balance together. To maintain balance while constantly shifting body weight is a skill few ever acquire.

If balance is to be maintained at all times, it is imperative that the feet be always directly under the body. Any movement of the feet which tends to unbalance the body must be eliminated. The fundamental ready position is one of perfect body balance and should always be maintained, especially in regards to the feet. Wide steps or leg movements which require a constant shift of weight from one leg to the other must be carefully executed. During this shift of weight there is a moment when balance is precarious rendering attack or defense ineffective.

Boxing technicians describe footwork as a "shuffling" movement. This implies that the steps taken are performed with the feet scarcely leaving the ground. They must be quick and smooth, lightly gliding across the surface. The individual steps should never be more than a few inches long unless unleashing a kick from extremely long range.

Moves in footwork must be balanced on the balls and toes of the feet for quickness and easy shifting. Fighting flat-footed is a sign of poor footwork and delays one's movements.

The greatest phase of footwork is the coordination of the hands and feet. When the upper and lower limbs work together instinctively, the art of moving is perfection itself.

It is well to remember that a true master of footwork can move in all directions quickly and easily. Never does he stand still for a moment. Above all things, you must keep moving, for a moving target is an elusive one.

The key to correct footwork is to move first, by using a free-flowing slide or shuffling movement, the foot nearest the direction the fighter intends to go. The snap or push comes from the other foot. To maintain proper spacing between the feet, the trailing foot follows the lead foot directly to the position.

A movement of the feet is not a leap into the air, nor is it

preceded with a knee dip; it is a slide or shuffle with the body maintaining a level balance.

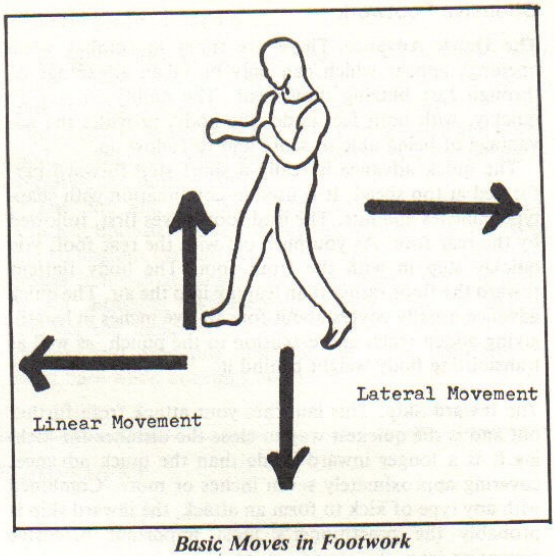
At least one foot should be in contact with the ground at the time a blow is landed. The contact of this foot is what gives the drive and carry through to a kick or punch.

A common mistake in footwork is to move the weight over and onto the near foot. This causes one to push off the wrong foot, as it is impossible to raise the foot which is carrying the weight of the body. This error makes a sustained attack practically impossible, and it definitely limits countering opportunities.

There are three moves or "directional paths" possible in footwork:

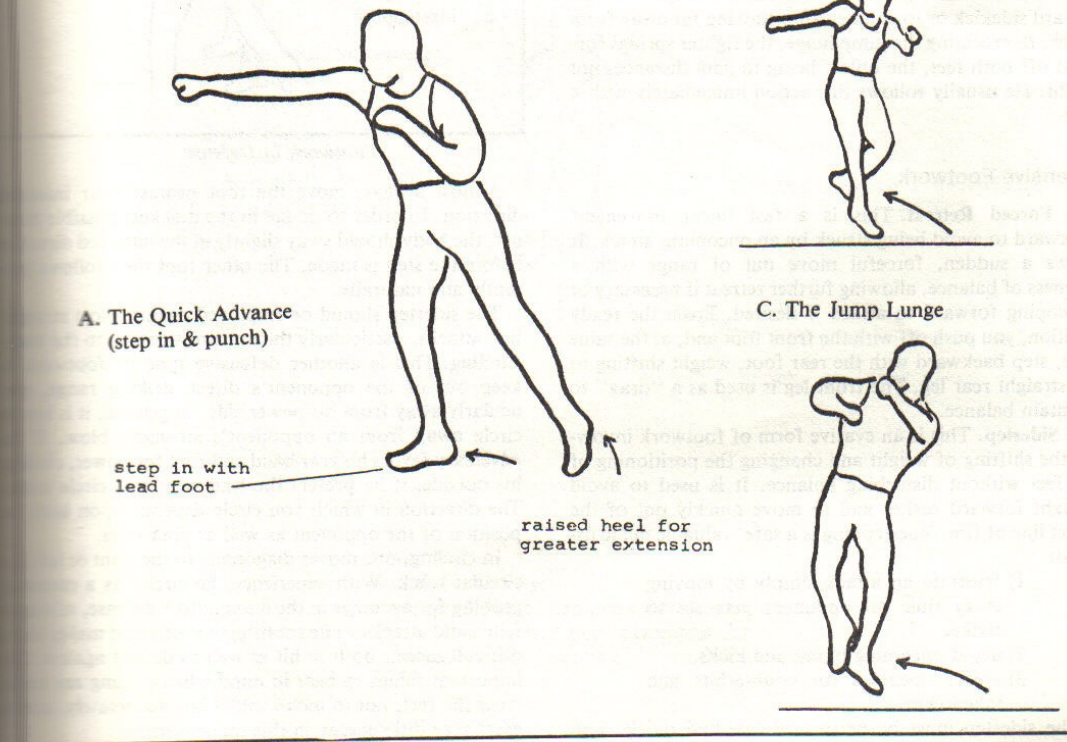
1) Linear Movement (advance, retreat)
2) Lateral Movement (side to side)
3) Circular Movement (left, right)

Almost all linear, lateral, and circular movements are executed with varying tempo, in an attempt to entice one's opponent into a responding action. Footwork in MU TAU can either be offensive (to bridge the gap to launch a blow) or defensive (to avoid being hit).



Basic Moves in Footwork

Footwork in Offense



Offensive Footwork

The Quick Advance. There are times in combat when openings appear which can only be taken advantage of through fast blitzing movement. The ability to step in quickly, with both feet under the body, provides the advantage of being able to score and to follow up.

The quick advance is really a short step forward performed at top speed. It is used in combination with snap-type punches and hits. The lead foot moves first, followed by the rear foot. As you push off with the rear foot, you quickly step in with the front foot. The body flattens toward the floor rather than leaping into the air. The quick advance usually covers about four to five inches in length, giving added reach and extension to the punch, as well as transmitting body weight behind it.

The Inward Skip. This launches your attack from further out and is the quickest way to close the distance for kicking.It is a longer inward stride than the quick advance, covering approximately seven inches or more. Combined with any type of kick to form an attack, the inward skip is probably the practitioner's most important offensive maneuver from the outside range.

The Jump Lunge. This is another type of linear advancement that is not often used but available to the fighter if needed. When combined with a sidekick, it forms a long-distance attack, covering an extremely wide gap. Since it is initiated at such an extensive distance, more momentum and hitting force is possible with this maneuver. For this reason, it is utilized primarily to penetrate deeply with an upward sidekick or to counter after moving far away from a kick. In executing the jump lunge, the fighter springs forward off both feet, the object being to gain distance, not height. He usually follows this action immediately with a kick.

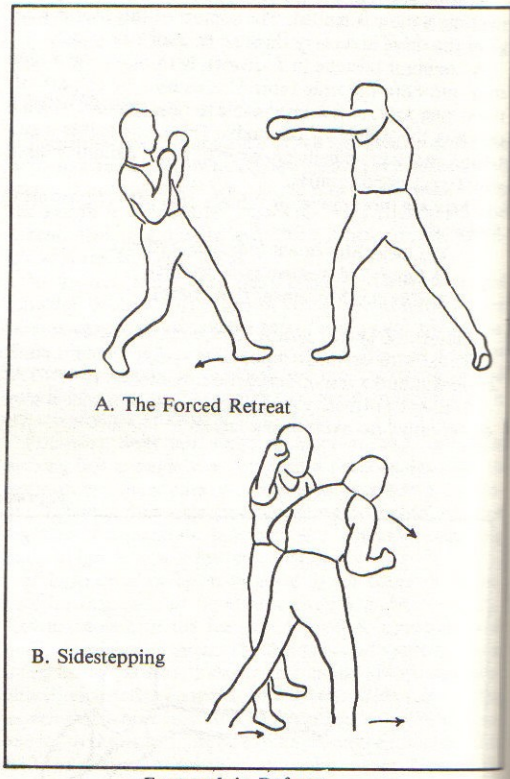
Defensive Footwork

The Forced Retreat. This is a fast linear movement backward to avoid being struck by an oncoming attack. It allows a sudden, forceful move out of range with a sureness of balance, allowing further retreat if necessary or a stepping forward to attack if desired. From the ready position, you push off with the front foot and, at the same time, step backward with the rear foot, weight shifting to the straight rear leg. The front leg is used as a "drag" to maintain balance.

The Sidestep. This is an evasive form of footwork involving the shifting of weight and changing the positioning of the feet without disturbing balance. It is used to avoid straight forward rushes and to move quickly out of the direct line of fire. Sidestepping is a safe, valuable tactic used to:

1) frustrate an attack simply by moving every time an opponent gets set to strike,
2) avoid oncoming blows and kicks,
3) create openings for counterhits and takedowns.

The sidestep must be performed *late* and quick. You should wait until your opponent's kick or punch is almost on you and then step quickly either to the left or right.



Footwork in Defense

Almost always, move the foot nearest your intended direction. In order to dodge in the quickest possible manner, the body should sway slightly in the intended direction before the step is made. The other foot then follows promptly and naturally.

The sidestep should be employed against most straight-line attacks, particularly the upward sidekick to the body.

Circling. This is another defensive type of footwork to keep out of the opponent's direct striking range, particularly away from his power side. In general, it is best to circle away from an opponent's strongest blow. If the adversary favors his rear hand and foot for power, circle to his outside; if he prefers the lead weapons, circle inside. The direction in which you circle depends upon both the position of the opponent as well as your own.

In circling, one moves diagonally to the right or left in a circular track. With experience, he circles as a means of probing for openings in the antagonist's defense, mixing in feints and attacks while rotating in a way that makes him a difficult target, both to hit as well as defend against. The important things to bear in mind when circling are not to cross the feet, not to move wildly but deliberately, and to exert very little energy in this maneuvering.

variations:

a) Rotate Left—carries right stancer (southpaw) out of range of same stancer's left hand and foot. Also creates good position for the delivery of lead jab, lead hook punch, or leading hook kick.

b) Rotate Right—carries southpaw away from opposite stancer's rear weapons. Provides good position for solid rear-hand counters and keeping the opponent off-balance. Circling right against the same stancer will nullify his lead (right) hook punch.

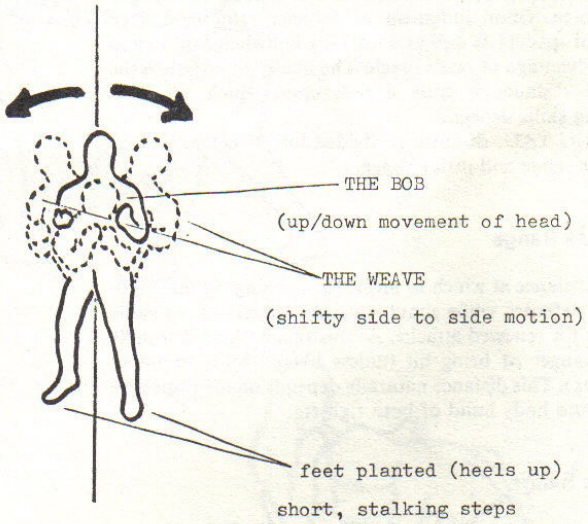
Bobbing and Weaving

Besides footwork, the other type of mobility used in MU TAU is bobbing and weaving, the up and down, side to side swaying motion of the shoulders and head. The fluid integration of lower body mobility at long range and upper body mobility in close makes the MU TAU fighter more versatile and unpredictable.

The bob and weave is primarily an infighting tactic which is both defensive and aggressive in nature. It makes the combatant very difficult to hit squarely and augments power in his close-range blows, particularly the lead hook punch. Bobbing and weaving is also useful in that it enables the hands to be free to attack, improving the defense and providing opportunities to hit hard from a solid base when openings occur.

BOB/WEAVE MOVEMENT

Evasive Head Movement
1) in leading
(variations)
2) in defense
a. slip (L, R)
b. duck (L, R)
c. snap-back



PURPOSE:
(a) Elusive Defense
(b) Unpredictable, Explosive Offense
flow into best body placement for
unleashing "driving" blows (hooks/crosses)

Bobbing and weaving allows you to escape your opponent's blows and still remain in range for a blistering two-fisted counter. For example, you can drop forward from the waist so that your foe's punches pass harmlessly over your head. Carrying your hands high, elbows in, you are ready to come right back with your own counters. Punching out of a weave adds leverage as you sway from side to side. The feet maintain a solid base and short, inward steps are employed to stalk the opponent, offering him no rest. The eyes should be focused on the opponent's chest or feet, depending on his height in relation to yours.

DISTANCING

The successful attack in combat depends upon many factors, one of which is the space relationship between the combatants. The fighter must constantly be aware of his position, the position of his opponent, and the "gap" that exists between them. This gap can be of several variations, each of which must be adjusted to quickly for purposes of attack and defense.

In launching a kick or punch, an inward motion referred to as "bridging the gap" must be studied and carefully analyzed. Starting an attack from too far out will cause the blow to fall short of its mark. An attack initiated from in too close to an opponent will be jammed and will lack any real force. Good judgment of distance requires a keen sense of spacing as well as a working knowledge of how to take advantage of one's reach. The ability to adjust to the correct distance is truly a skill upon which all other fighting skills depend.

In MU TAU, distance is divided into two main areas: outside range and inside range.

Outside Range

Is the distance at which to probe for openings in the opponent's defenses while simultaneously conserving valuable energy for renewed attacks. At this range, there is usually little danger of being hit (unless blitzed by a 'running' sidekick). This distance naturally depends on the respective reach and body build of both fighters.

Inside Range

Is the range from which to deliver an attack. Exists in three variations: long range, medium range, and infighting.

1) Long Range—is the distance from which foot attacks are most effective. Hand moves may be employed as distractions for follow-up kicks from this range but their scoring capacity is minimal. Also frequently referred to as Kicking Range.
2) Medium Range—is the distance near enough to deliver straight lead blows and far enough to initiate various kicks. This is a most versatile range for fighting as it offers the combatant the opportunity to unload either hand or leg offensives.
3) Infighting—is the art of combat at close range. Not only does it take skill to get in close, but it takes skill to stay there. To get in tight, it is necessary to use shifty bodywork (bobbing and weaving). Once in, stay close, for if the tight inside position is kept, it is possible to shift with the opponent. Place the forehead on the opponent's chest and press forward, forcing him off-balance. Pommel the body with short, jolting blows. Rely on compact, powerful punches (hooks and uppercuts), lethal elbow and knee smashes, and grappling moves. Though kicking is ineffective from in so close, the legs can nevertheless be used to immobilize both the opponent's footwork and legwork. If the opponent drops his arms to protect his body, switch the attack to the head. Back out only if you feel that you are not doing the job in close.

   Infighting is of particular value to the shorter fighter, for it makes him the equal, and even superior to, his taller opponent. The shorter man must be alert to move inside the taller man's swings at the first opportunity. Once inside he should remain there.

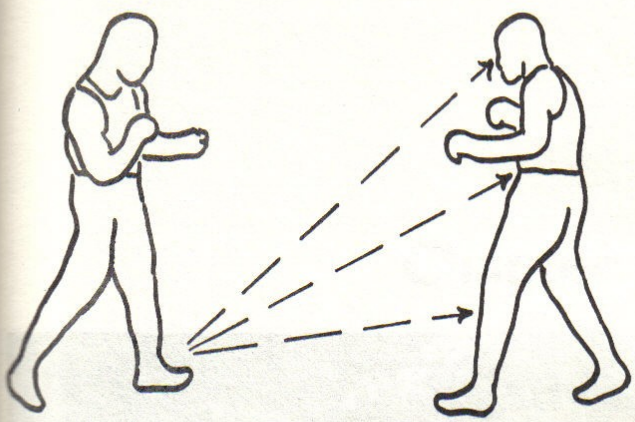
   The shorter man has to work to keep his foe under constant pressure while staying away from the front of his body. Only in this way will the shorter man be able to strike with effectiveness at his lankier opponent.

   The taller man will most likely try to back away. By continually crowding, the shorter fighter can work to prevent this.

   The shorter man must also work to avoid a clinch. One way he can do this is by keeping continual fire on his opponent's midsection.

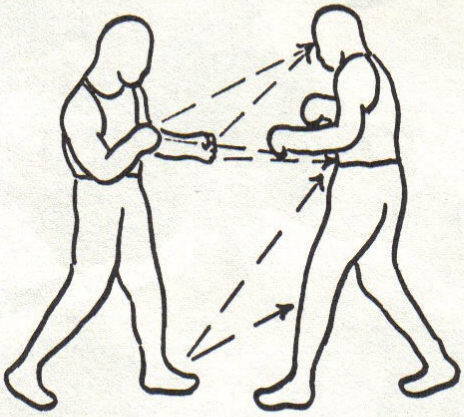
   Tall fighters have to become adept at dealing with the crowder. What they must seek to do is to entrap the smaller fighter's arms while immobilizing his legs. Then the tall man can lash out with a blistering two-fisted attack upon his foe's sides and stomach.

   Infighting lacks the stark drama of a crisp combination or sharp counterblow, but its importance to combat goes without saying. The skillful fighter must not neglect this essential art.



Distancing

1) Long Range (Kicking Range)



2) Medium Range
straight blows to head & body
various kicks (low/medium)

3) Infighting
short, jolting punches
use of elbows & knees
takedowns

Distancing (Inside Range)

Chapter 4

Attack

Pankration was a "total" martial art. It utilized every conceivable weapon of the body and every technique for fighting that could be imagined. Technically, pankration was a 'free-form' mixture of boxing, wrestling, and street-fighting. The object of the pankratiast was to render his opponent either helpless or senseless and to this end, almost any means were allowed. Besides hitting with the fist and kicking with the foot, the pankratiast would trip or sweep his foe, lay hold of his feet, hair, and ears, dislocate his fingers and arms, and apply crushing headlocks and chokes. The fighters were also proficient in using their elbows and knees to land vicious blows in close. A favorite ploy known as *chancery* involved grabbing the opponent's hair and pulling him face-forward into a resounding upward punch. Only biting and gouging were enjoined, though the tough Spartans allowed these too in their local contests.

Like pankration, MU TAU embodies the most effective moves for hitting, kicking, and grappling. MU TAU is not "stylized" in the sense of favoring straight lines over curves, kicking over punching, etc. On the contrary, MU TAU is "total", utilizing all ways and means, all lines and angles, to engage and defeat the opposition.

The object of MU TAU is to land a well-placed, disabling blow or to force the opponent into submission via grappling without being hit in the process. In order to hit and avoid being hit, skill is required in the areas of attack, defense, and counterattack. Of these three areas of action, MU TAU emphasizes offensive moves.

MU TAU attacking weapons are practical and direct. Through constant practice, they become fast, powerful, and deceptive movements. There are no complex, fancy techniques such as jumping or twisting kicks since MU TAU is geared to street-fighting where motion economy and efficiency are stressed. Therefore, the MU TAU practitioner is careful not to disrupt his balance, expose his vital spots, unwittingly wear himself out, or lose sight of his opponent. There are no extra motions and no deliberation in his actions. In a fast, full-contact exchange, the simple way is indeed the best way.

Attack is based upon the ability to hit or take the opponent down. The fighter who intitiates this action forces his opponent to thwart or repel the assault before retaliating with a decisive blow of his own. In general, there are two methods of attack: direct or indirect.

Direct Attack: A direct attack consists of a single fist or foot movement. Low kicks and blows delivered during infighting are examples of direct attack. They are launched toward the opponent explosively and without any deviation. The direct attack usually employs the longest weapon to the nearest open target. The master of attack knows the value of a straight lead and is aware of what is liable to happen on any lead. He realizes that for every lead there is an opening, and for every opening, a counter, and for every counter a defense.

Indirect Attack. An indirect attack is the attack of the master. He has at his command techniques to bewilder and confuse the opponent, thereby creating many openings. An indirect attack consists of two movements, the first of which is a prelude to a follow-up action, having the specific purpose of drawing the opponent into making a defensive move, thereby opening a zone for the actual attack. An example of a preludent movement is the feint, a false attack done with the intent of evoking a parry or evasion from the adversary. The attempt to parry or evade a feint will result in the further opening of another target zone.

Feinting is a skill of using the body in pretending attack at one point, and then attacking another. It involves using a movement or gesture with some part of the body that will suggest that a blow is about to be thrown. Movements with the eyes, head, shoulders, hands, and feet are all effective feints. The most common feints are those executed with the hands.

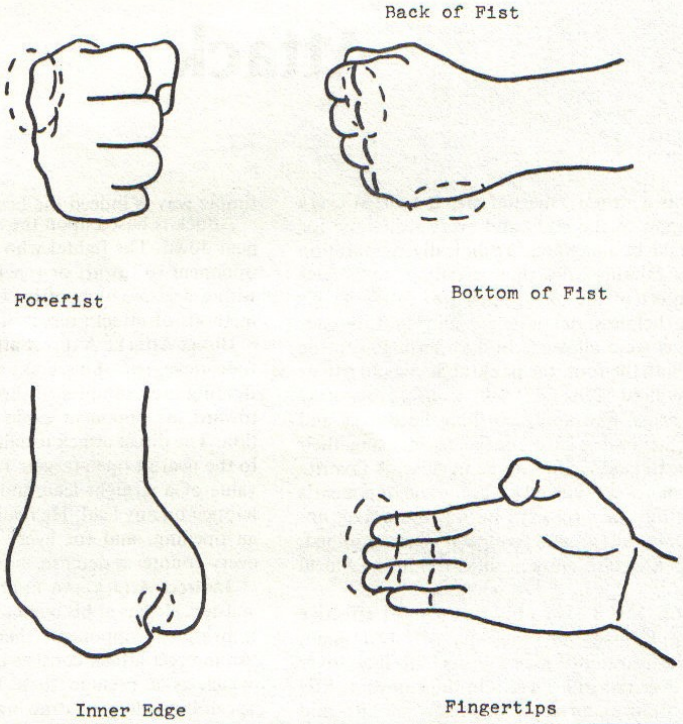
In executing a hand feint, you must be sure to make it appear to be a real hit. The distance which the arm should cover as well as the speed of the hand feint depends upon an opponent's response. Against an opponent with a fast

response, the slightest jerk of the hand is enough to make a feint effective; against an opponent with slower reflexes, the arm should be extended out a little further with the feint made in a deliberate manner.

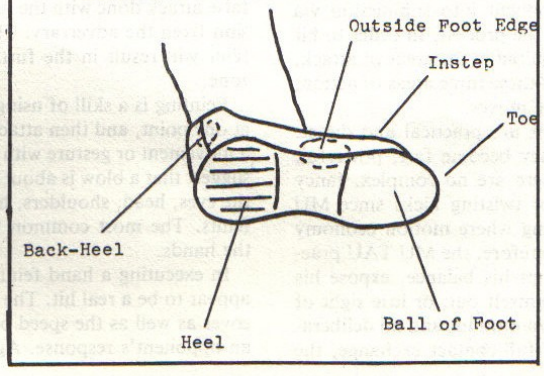
Most of the attack in MU TAU is indirect, meaning that a kick or punch is usually preceded by a distractive move or decoy of some sort.

STRIKING POINTS OF THE BODY

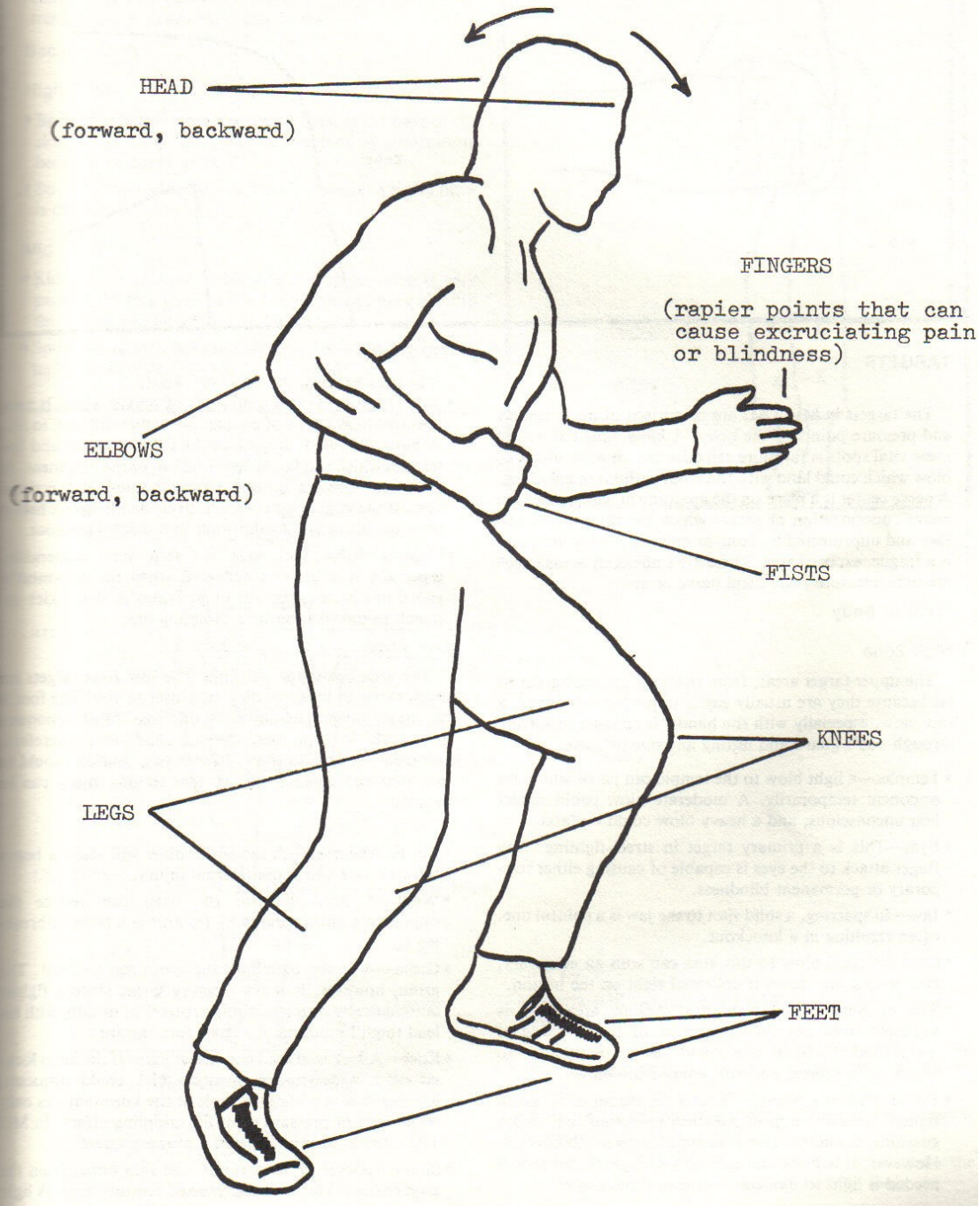
STRIKING POINTS OF THE HAND

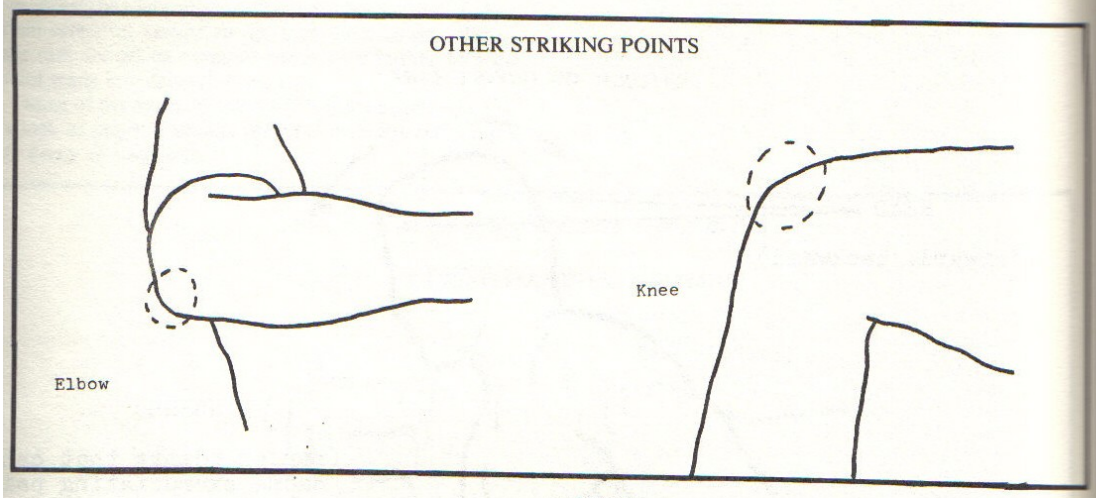


STRIKING POINTS OF THE SHOD FOOT



NATURAL WEAPONS CHART





TARGETS

The targets in MU TAU are comprised of nerve centers and pressure points of the body. A blow aimed at one of these vital spots is far more effective than a wild, unaimed blow which could land with force but without much effect. A nerve center is a place on the anatomy in which there is a heavy concentration of nerves which are close to the surface and unprotected by bone or muscle. A pressure point is a fragile, exposed area. There are some body areas which are both pressure points and nerve centers.

Front of Body

High Zone

The upper target areas, from the neck up, are harder to hit because they are usually easier to protect. However, a fast blow, especially with the hands, is capable of getting through one's guard and hitting any one of these.

- Temples—a light blow to the temple can jar or stun your opponent temporarily. A moderate blow could render him unconscious, and a heavy blow could be fatal.
- Eyes—This is a primary target in street-fighting. Any finger attack to the eyes is capable of causing either temporary or permanent blindness.
- Jaw—In sparring, a solid shot to the jaw is a painful one, often resulting in a knockout.
- Chin—A hard blow to this area can stun an adversary, even knock him down if delivered right on the button.
- Side of Neck—This is an ideal striking area as it is available from any angle. Because of the presence of nerves and the main artery and vein, it is possible to knock an opponent out with a moderate blow.
- Throat (Adam's Apple)—Hitting the throat of a skilled fighter is almost impossible since his hands are always guarding it, and his chin is dropped forward to cover it. However, if a blow manages to get through, all that is needed is light to moderate force to do damage.

Mid Zone

The area between the neck and waist.

- Solar Plexus—This is a network of nerves which is very sensitive to any type of contact but rather difficult to hit. A blow delivered straight on hits the stomach and intestines which can knock the wind out of the opponent. A blow sent upward is more serious because it functions against the vital organs—heart, liver, and lungs. A heavy blow to this target would result in a quick knockout.
- Floating Ribs—This area is often very vulnerable, especially if a blow is delivered when the opponent's guard has been faked out of position. A sharp kick or punch to the ribs can be a disabling one.

Low Zone

The area below the belt line. The low zone targets are much easier to hit since they are closer to you. The foot is the major weapon employed to this area. Most opponents are weak in low-zone defense and are, therefore, vulnerable to attacks there. In sparring, caution should be exercised and contact light so that serious injury can be avoided.

- Lower Abdomen—A moderate blow will stun; a heavy blow or kick can cause internal injury.
- Wrist—A hard kick to the wrist can reduce the opponent's hitting ability by fracturing a bone or breaking it.
- Groin—A heavy blow into the groin can be fatal. The groin, however, is not a primary target since a fighter automatically or instinctively protects it, usually with his lead thigh by turning his front foot inward.
- Knee—A kick into the knee causes pain. If the leg is locked rigid, a downward thrusting kick could dislocate. Kicking in at a 45-degree angle at the knee requires only 60 pounds of pressure to inflict crippling effect. In MU TAU, the knee is considered a primary target.
- Shin—Another primary target, the shin bone, from the knee to the ankle, is an unprotected sensitive area. A light

or moderate kick is very painful. A heavy blow can immobilize. Both the front portion and the sides of the shin are open to attack.

- Instep—Stamping down on top of the foot results in extreme pain. A heavy blow can disable.

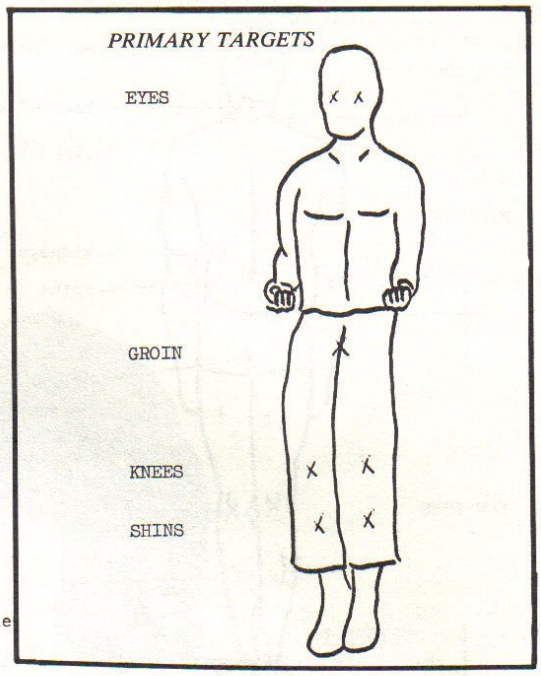
Back of Body

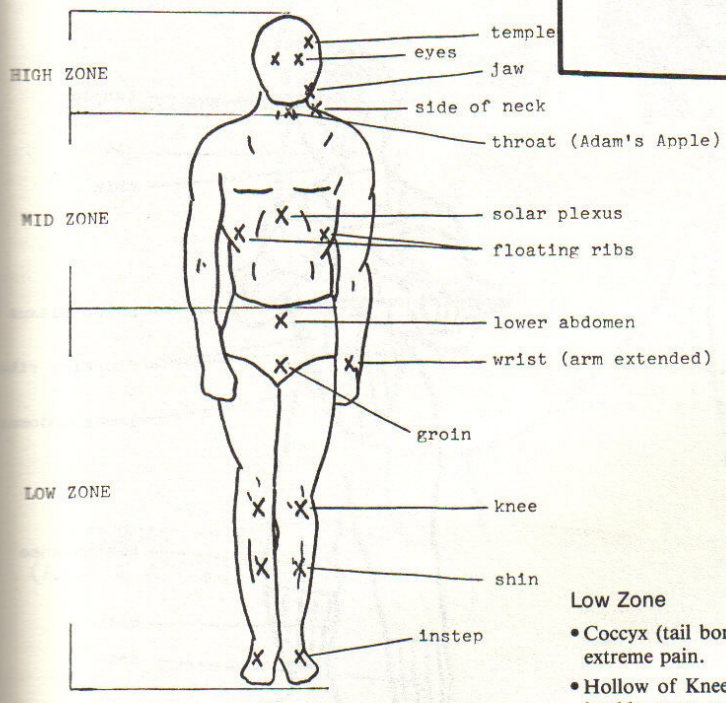
High Zone

- Back of Head—Under the round bone at the base of the skull a light blow can produce whiplash. A moderate to heavy blow could be fatal.
- Base of Neck—A moderate blow is painful; a heavy blow is dangerous.

Mid Zone

- Kidneys—A straight-in blow to the kidney area is very painful. Hitting in an upward direction, a heavy blow to the kidney can be serious or fatal.
- Spine—A moderate blow can shock or stun; a heavy attack could result in fatality.



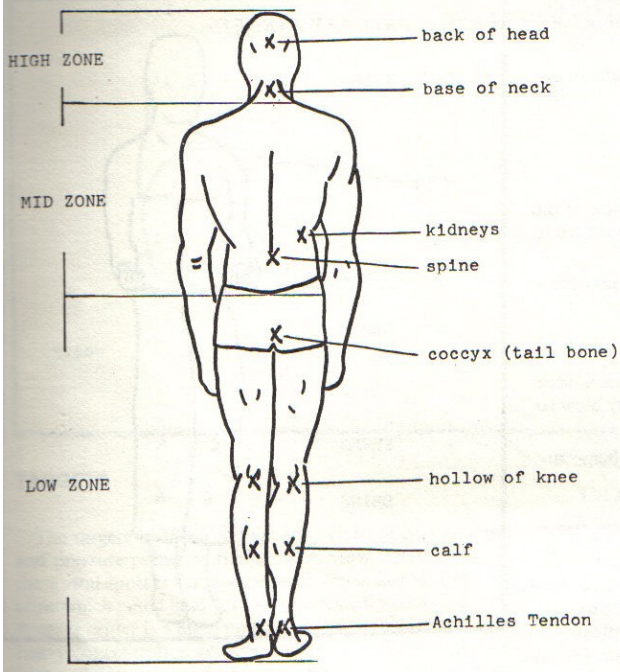


Targets in Street-Fighting

(Front)

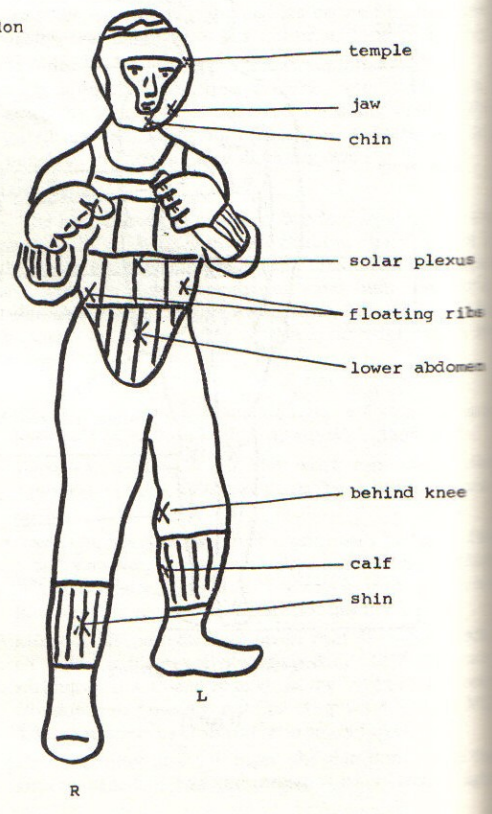
Low Zone

- Coccyx (tail bone)—A heavy blow to this target causes extreme pain.
- Hollow of Knee—Kicking or sweeping at this area can buckle your opponent down, cause pain and muscle spasm.
- Calf—A foot attack into the calf causes pain and muscle spasm.
- Achilles Tendon—Kicking into the tendon just above the heel results in pain and immobility of the foot.



Targets in Street-Fighting

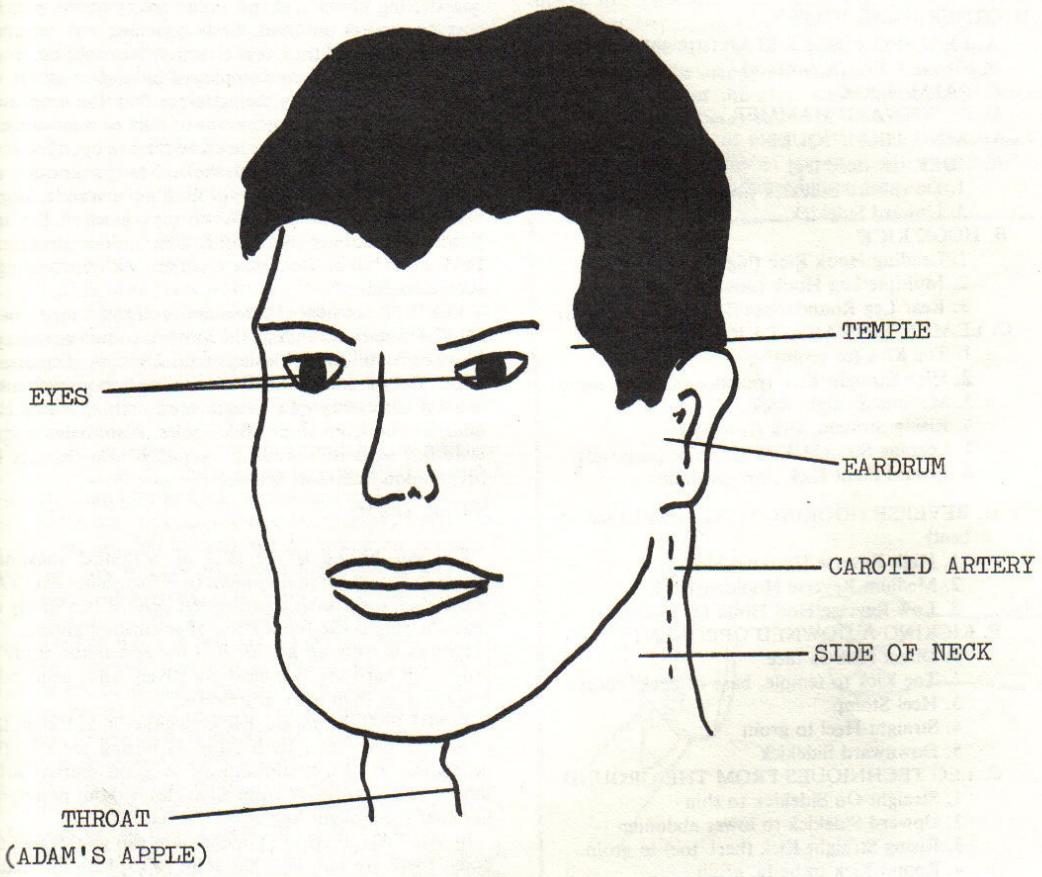
(Back)



Targets in Sparring

(padded areas only)

STRIKING THE HEAD



THE MU TAU WEAPONRY

I. BASIC FIST TECHNIQUES
- A. LEAD JAB (to face, body)
- B. STRAIGHT VERTICAL-FIST PUNCH (to face, body)
- C. STRAIGHT REAR THRUST (to face, body)
- D. BACK-FIST BLOW
- E. LEAD HOOK PUNCH (to head, body, groin)
- F. REAR HOOK (high/medium/low)
- G. UPPERCUT (to chin, body, groin)
- H. REAR OVERHAND SWING

II. OTHER HAND BLOWS
- A. LEADING FINGER STAB (straight to penetrate)
- B. FINGER FLICK (to face)
- C. PALM HOOK
- D. DOWNWARD HAMMER

III. KICKING TECHNIQUES
- A. SIDEKICK (lead leg)
  1. Downward Sidekick (to shin, knee)
  2. Upward Sidekick
- B. HOOK KICK
  1. Leading Hook Kick (high/medium/low)
  2. Multiple Leg Hook (double, triple)
  3. Rear Leg Roundhouse (low/medium/high)
- C. LEADING STRAIGHT KICK
  1. Toe Kick (to groin)
  2. High Straight Kick (practice purposes only)
  3. Medium Straight Kick
  4. Rising Straight Kick (to wrist)
  5. Leaping Straight Kick (practice purposes)
  6. Inward Slant Kick (low/medium)
- D. REVERSE HOOKING HEEL (stiff-legged or bent)
  1. High Reverse Hooking Heel
  2. Medium Reverse Hooking Heel
  3. Low Reverse Heel Hook (as sweep)
- E. KICKING A DOWNED OPPONENT
  1. Direct Kick to face
  2. Toe Kick to temple, base of neck, coccyx
  3. Heel Stomp
  4. Straight Heel to groin
  5. Downward Sidekick
- G. LEG TECHNIQUES FROM THE GROUND
  1. Straight-On Sidekick to shin
  2. Upward Sidekick to lower abdomen
  3. Rising Straight Kick (heel/toe) to groin
  4. Round Kick to body, groin
  5. Swing Kick to face
  6. Footsweep (either leg)
  7. Rolling Leg Vise

IV. ELBOW AND KNEE BLOWS
- A. ELBOW SMASH
  1. Forward Elbow Smash
  2. Side Elbow Smash
  3. Rear Elbow Smash
  4. Downward Elbow Smash
- B. KNEE SMASH
  1. Upward Knee Smash
  2. Side Knee Smash
  3. Knee Drop (on fallen opponent)

V. GRAPPLING TECHNIQUES
- A. TAKEDOWNS
- B. JOINT TWISTING
- C. HEAD/NECK LOCKS (includes strangulations)

VI. "FOUL" TACTICS

THE FIST

The use of the fist in the ancient art took the form of pile-driving hooks and uppercuts. Most of the punching was directed at the head. Body punching was considered less dramatic and thus, less effective. Nevertheless, fist attacks to the body were employed by some fighters who believed that the body, being larger than the head, was a better target. Their strategy was to hurt or wear down the opponent with body blows in an attempt to open the adversary up for crushing head shots. The pankratiast also delivered blows with the heel of the hand in a wide, looping manner, and with the side of the clenched fist in a downward hammer-type stroke. Descriptions given in the Epics often tell of the end of a contest with the landing of such an assult.

The fist is considered a primary offensive weapon in the MU TAU arsenal. Though the foot has certain advantages, it can be contained by closing in quickly or by jamming the preparatory motion. The hands are much more difficult to contain since they can be delivered with speed at close quarters and from all possible angles. Also, balance is not disturbed as it is in kicking. A punch also requires less preparation than does a kick.

Hitting Theory

Efficient hitting is the skill of obtaining maximum power in blows with a minimum of effort. Since MU TAU is based on the maxim that the best defense is a strong offense, hitting is the foundation of scientific fighting.

Hitting is truly an art for it is the systematic study of how to hit hard and fast most effectively while using body power rather than mere arm power.

In MU TAU, blows are delivered either in a straight line or with a bent arm. Both types of hitting are effective depending on the circumstances. A good martial artist should be able to strike from all angles without preference to either the straight line or the curved.

In MU TAU, there are punches that can go through the body, there are punches that seem to explode internally, and there are still other punches that only hurt on the surface. As is the case, the hitting methods of this art are generally classified as either "snappy" or "driving."

A snappy hit is characterized by speed whereby the retraction (arm withdrawal) of the strike is as quick, if not quicker, than its initiation (delivery away from the body). Muscle tension is applied for but a split second upon impact. They are most dependent on the crisp whipping action of the forearm and elbow joint. snapping a blow entails a smooth, rapid, outward flicker using the elbow as the center of movement. The elbow and shoulder should be

relaxed. The slightest tension in these areas will push or swing the arm out without any snap.

Driving attacks are forceful, power blows which are buried deep within the target area. The recovery of the arm in these hits is comparatively slower than the sudden, explosive initiation. They are thrusted with maximum depth concentrating greater body weight and commitment than in snappy punches. The driving punch is ballistic in delivery and concerns linking the various muscle groups into a chain of force.

Hitting force is the result of many factors: speed, leverage, accuracy, etc. All hitting, be it straight or curved, snappy or driving, utilizes maximum body weight in every blow, hitting with the body, the arms serving as the vehicle of force. Arm action alone is insufficient to provide real power to blows. The knack of effective hitting is getting the whole body into the punch at the right time. The hard puncher is able to coordinate the action of his entire body from his feet to his fist so as to get the most effect. If the arm is driven in first and the body follows after the blow lands, you do not get the simultaneous action needed to impart the most force in the attack.

Real power is generated by shifting the weight of the body behind the blow at the moment of impact. In order to obtain a complete shift of weight, punches must be thrown using a quick twist of the waist or a full body pivot over the straight lead leg. Punches should never be thrown with any windup motion. A powerful punch is obtained only by shifting the weight in such a way that the hip and shoulder precede the arm to the centerline of the body. Otherwise, at the moment of impact there will not be full body weight behind the blow.

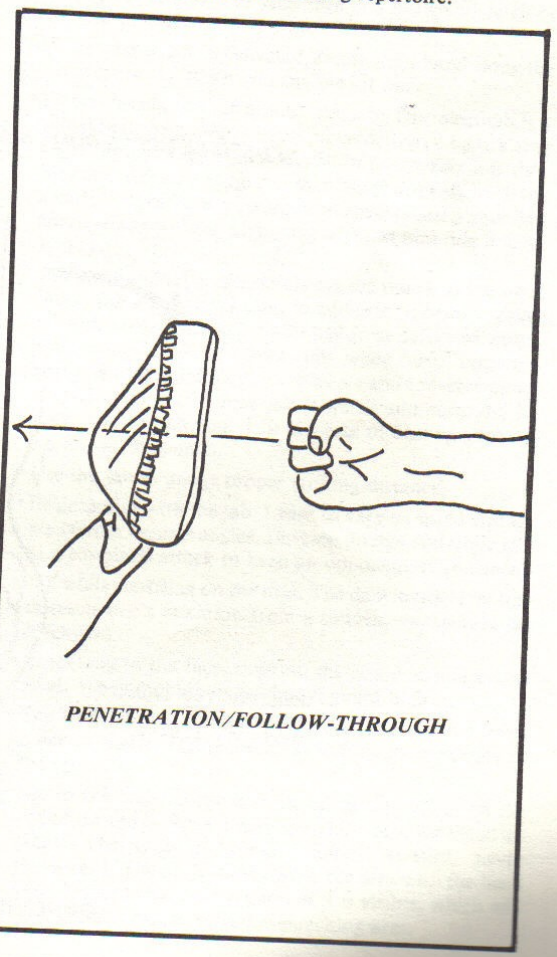
The secret of effective hitting is connecting the action of the feet, hips, body, and arm, and "setting" the muscles that come into play at the same moment and at the instant the punch lands. So great is the power that may be attained in this manner that a real artist of hitting can uncork a disabling blow without displaying any apparent effort.

Hitting is not pushing. True hitting is a sudden release of concentrated energy which explodes from a relaxed state and increases in power as the arm leaves the body. Pushing is exactly the opposite, with the concentrated force at the start of the blow and a subsequent loss of power as the blow makes its way toward the target. In real hitting, the feet are always directly under the body maintaining excellent balance and sturdy support from the ground. In pushing, the body is often off-balance as an excess of weight is directed forward. The force does not come from a body pivot but from a push off the rear toe.

Speed, too, is important to effective hitting. The punch which is delivered fast has more snap to it than a slow blow. Besides the nervous energy and quickness of thinking which enable the athlete to put his muscles into action swiftly, keeping the muscles relaxed until the moment you actually use them in hitting will enable you to punch faster and therefore harder. If the muscles are tensed before starting a punch, it will slow you up, there will be no snap in the blow, and your punch will be merely a forceful push.

Accuracy is another important factor. It will not do you much good to be able to hit hard if you cannot land your punches on the right spots. Real knockout artists owe their success in that respect to their ability to hit accurately.

Another aspect of effective hitting is to make your punches "follow through." Many fighters fail to get the most out of their blows because they hit a certain distance, just far enough to reach their opponent, then stop their punch and withdraw the fist before the attack gets its fullest effect. Hitting in this manner makes the blow only a tap. Follow through refers to the amount of momentum, velocity, and force which carries a blow clear through an object upon landing. In punching, one must strive to drive through the target, not just at it. The penetration of a snappy-type blow differs from that of a driving assault, being far less. The piercing effect of a snappy hit is but an inch or so beyond the surface while that of a driving punch goes much deeper, carrying clear through the point of entry, surface and all. This is a result of the body commitment involved: the snappy offense is based on the quick extension/recovery of the arm, while the thrusted attack concentrates on hyperextension of the arm once it reaches its mark. Each type of blow has a definite advantage in combat and must combine harmoniously to provide the fighter with a comprehensive hitting repertoire.



PENETRATION/FOLLOW-THROUGH

Straight Punching

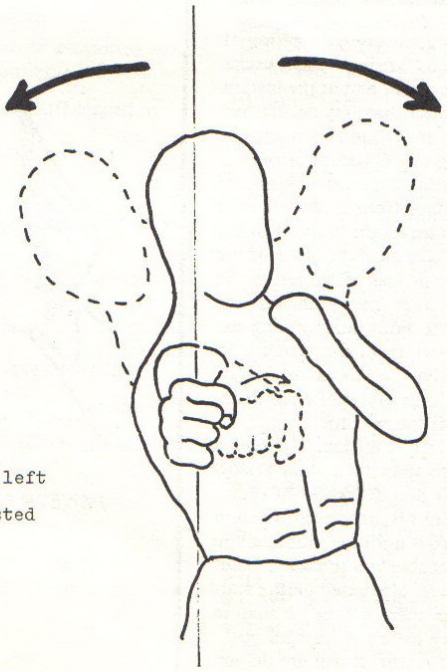
Straight punches are those which are delivered straight from the shoulder, using a quick twist of the waist as the propelling force. They are the foundation of fighting skill, and form the nucleus of the MU TAU arsenal of hand techniques.

The records of history indicate that early boxing was done almost entirely with the bent arm, that is, by swinging and hooking. The natural tendency for an untrained person when fighting is to swing in a wide, looping fashion. Straight punching, then, must be studied carefully to be learned.

Straight hitting has several advantages over curved hitting. It is much faster and more accurate as evidenced by the fact that a straight blow will beat a hook or a swing in every instance. There is also less chance of missing with a straight hit and because of the greater frequency of scores, more damage can be done. Since balance is less disturbed, straight hitting is safer, surer, and easier.

The straight punches employed in MU TAU include the lead jab, the vertical-fist punch, and the straight rear thrust.

POSSIBLE UPPER BODY MOVEMENTS IN STRAIGHT HITTING



head weaves left
vertical fisted

head weaves
right
horizontal
fist/shoulder
roll

PUNCHING CENTER/vertical fisted

Lead Jab

- The jab begins almost every offensive onslaught with the hands. It gauges the distance for the harder blows and is the lead-in blow for the majority of combination punches.
- Though not a knockout punch, the jab is a crispy, tantalizing blow that slows up an opponent and sets him up for the finishing stroke.
- The lead jab is a "feeler." It is a light, easy hit, although it stings, jars, and annoys.
- The jab, in respect to the other fist blows, is effective in beginning several offensive patterns at arms length from the opponent since it closes the gap for compact, angular punches which depend on close quarters for their effectiveness.
- Although the jab may be regarded as a light-hitting blow, its speed and ease of delivery keeps an opponent constantly off-balance and can offset the harder but slower punches by beating them to the score.
- A good time to start a jab to the opponent is when he starts a swing at you. It will stop many a hard swing before the swing can land. It will also be through an open guard where a swing would be warded off.
- The jab has the advantage of a somewhat safe, probing hand range, where one can pick his targets.
- The lead jab is perhaps the most important of all the punches you should have in your arsenal. Though not the most powerful blow, the jab, when used with skill and precision, is a very efficient scoring weapon. This is obvious since the lead hand is the one nearest your opponent, enabling you to reach him quicker and with greater accuracy than with the rear hand.
- Used correctly it is the sign of the scientific fighter, who uses strategy rather than force. The jab requires skill and finesse as well as speed and deception. Its great advantage is that body balance is not disturbed.
- The jab is both an offensive and defensive tool. Offensively, it serves to keep the opponent off-balance and sets him up for harder blows. Defensively, the jab often stops or effectively interrupts an attack. Through "defensive hitting" you can frequently whip in a jab to the opponent's face (or body) as he is about to let go with a punch of his own at you.
- The jab begins from the fundamental ready position. It snaps out quickly on a straight line without any apparent preliminary movement. It comes straight in from the center of the body and from wherever the lead hand is at the time.
- At the same instant you deliver the jab, step in quickly with your lead foot. The punch should strike its target a split second before your front foot (on the ball) touches the floor.
- As you stride forward with the lead foot, push off on the rear foot. This action is what puts power into the blow.
- Follow through with the punch. Your object, remember, is to hit "through" the target. Never stop your punch once it reaches its mark.
- Always return the jab to the ready position after attacking with it for renewed offensives or for protective measures against a counter-blow.
- Snap the jab away from the body and return it high to offset a rear-hand counter. Relax the arm back rather than jerking it back hard.
- Develop the jab to the point where it is automatic as well as lightning fast and forceful without great effort. Jab straight and accurate in a smooth, easy action.
- Use the jab to keep the opponent on the defensive, allowing him no rest or chance to counter.
- When shooting out the jab, watch out for intercepting kicks. Vary your angles of delivery to offset such a tactic.
- Use sustained jabs for the second or third blow has an excellent chance of landing upon a missed first jab. Deliver each with the utmost economy.
- Your lead arm should be fully extended when the jab strikes its target. Your chin, if your stance is correct, will be protected by your forward shoulder. Your rear hand shields the rear side of your face and is alert to catch or parry a possible counter punch.
- After your punch is delivered, return your hand along the same plane on which you snapped it out.
- Be careful not to "telegraph" the jab. The telegraph is a signal that the punch is about to be delivered by drawing back the attacking hand a second or two before it is shot forward. Another telegraph to avoid is drawing back the lead leg. Avoid these common mistakes—snap your jab ahead wisely without giving the slightest hint that it is on its way.
- The forehand jab is almost always the punch to use when launching a fist attack. But in addition to being a prime offensive weapon, the jab also has great defensive worth. For instance, initiate your jab when your opponent begins a rear-hand blow, such as a karate reverse punch or boxing cross. If your jab is quick and accurate, his blow won't reach you. This is a case of beating your opponent to the punch.
- Use the jab to gauge proper striking distance.
- Be deceptive with the jab. Learn to vary its speed and apply it from various angles. Develop double and triple jabs as a sustained attack to keep an opponent off-balance.
- Jab while shuffling on the toes. The dancing-type motion distracts one's attention from a sudden, unexpected jab offensive.
- In jabbing to the face, position the guard at midsection level. When jabbing to the body, guard high.
- The lead jab is a primary MU TAU weapon due to its quick initiation and recovery as well as its proximity to the opponent.
- Jab to the body to produce an exhausting effect on the opponent and to force him to drop his guard for facial attacks. The blow is always slightly upward, never downward. The body must follow the arm with the head held down so that only the top of it is visible, which will be protected by the extended punching arm.

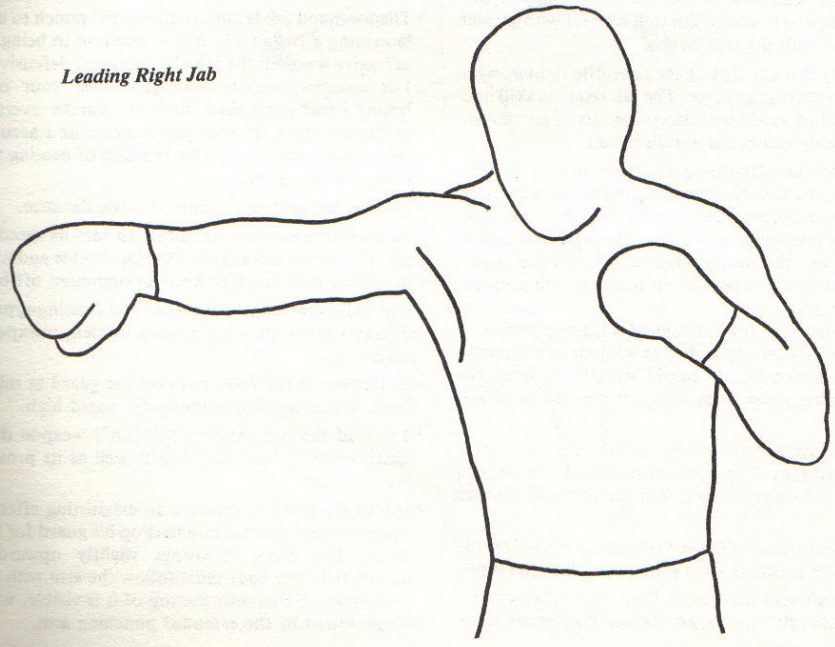
- While not as damaging as a head shot, a jab to the body can hurt the opponent if driven accurately to the solar plexus. It may be wise strategy to work the body (particularly on a tall fighter) in order to belt in some head blows.
- In lead jabs to the body, the body should follow the arm. A blow to the body is both more effective in hitting force and much safer when the puncher drops to the level of the target.
- Dip the body forward from the waist to a position at right angles to the legs. Strive to keep the forward leg only slightly bent while the rear leg may be more flexed to attain the best level. As the body drops, snap the lead arm into extension toward the opponent's solar plexus. Carry the rear hand high for readiness against the opponent's hook. Keep the head down so that it will be protected by the extended punching arm.
- Use the "shoulder roll" (i.e. a defensive skill employing a rotation of the forward shoulder to protect the chin) in jabbing to the body. In this technique, you must also land your fist *horizontally* to accommodate the movement of your shoulder.
- In jabbing to any target, vary your head placement and upper body movement to protect against the opponent's probable counter.
- Deliver the jab from anywhere at any moment. Avoid attempts to get set and to use extra motions, such as withdrawing the punching hand before initiation. Punch with speed and deception without wasting prior movements.
- Move fast and return the lead hand back to the basic position quickly after you throw the jab. Practice continually so that you can initiate your jab and retract it in a flash. Each time you jab, bring your fist back just far enough to get leverage, then hit out again. When you jab quickly and repeatedly, you are setting your opponent up for what is to follow, be it another punch or a kick.
- Practice makes perfect, and this is especially true of the jab. There are many ways to develop a stinging jab. Both the heavy bag and timing ball are excellent. The speed bag, too, is effective. Other than these devices, having a partner wearing a focuser pad or holding up the palms of his hands for you to jab at will help sharpen your jab. This method is superb, as your partner can move around, moving his hands up, down, side-to-side, and in other directions, thus providing an unpredictable moving target.
- The lead jab, whether it is thrown to the face or body, should always be accompanied by a safety step to either the left or right. This step will take the head out of the plane in which the opponent's counterblow will be delivered.

Fundamentals of Form

Lead Jab (to face)

1. Weight or balance should not be disturbed.
2. Step in with the jab for greater force.
3. The shoulder remains flat.

Leading Right Jab

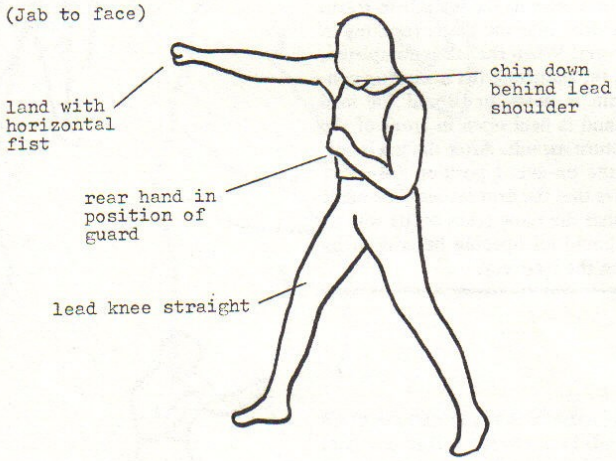


4. Jab through a point, not at one.
5. At the moment of impact, the muscles are tensed. Before impact, they are relaxed.
6. All the force of the blow is away from the body, the arm merely relaxes back after delivery.
7. The punching arm is retracted along the same plane as its delivery.
8. The rear hand is held open and ready to guard.
9. The punching fist should land horizontally.
10. The lead arm and shoulder rotate a quarter of a turn as the jab moves forward.

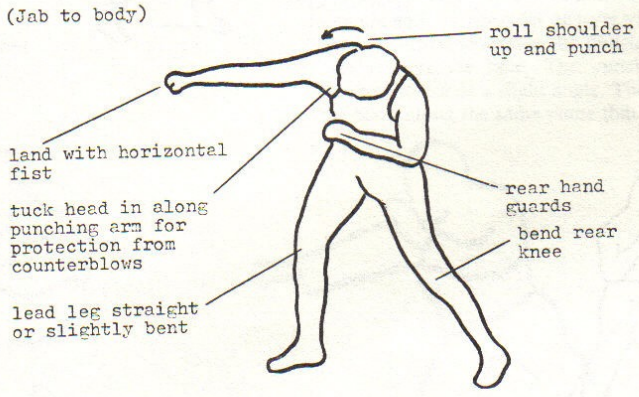
Lead Jab (to body)

1. Power obtained through a body drop from the waist, to a position over the lead foot.
2. The body must follow the arm.
3. The greatest part of the body drop is obtained through a bend of the rear knee.
4. The lead leg is kept as straight as possible.
5. The lead arm is driven straight with the shoulder on level with the midsection.

(Jab to face)



(Jab to body)


roll shoulder up and punch
land with horizontal fist
tuck head in along punching arm for protection from counterblows
rear hand guards
bend rear knee
lead leg straight or slightly bent

6. The rear hand is held up and open, ready for a counter hook punch.
7. The movement must be sudden and recovery immediate.
8. At full extension, the jab should land horizontally on the target.

EXECUTION (Lead Jab to face): The classic style of jabbing is straight from the shoulder, using an extended, forward motion of the arm. At the same time, a step inward is taken with the front foot to transmit body weight into the punch. The length of the step depends upon the distance needed to land with the jab. The rear foot follows the same distance to keep the same relative spacing between the feet. Raise the rear heel for extra reach and good balance. The first movement of the hand is forward. The arm and shoulder rotate a quarter of a turn as the jab moves forth. The rotation puts the shoulder into the blow, resulting in added reach and more power. When the jab is completed, the lead arm is extended; the punching fist is making contact horizontally; the chin is down in behind the lead shoulder; and the rear hand is held open in front of the face to guard against a return assault. After the jab lands, fold it back quickly to the on-guard position for other maneuvers. It is imperative that the arm recovery be made through the same plane that the blow takes on its way to the target. At no time should an opening be created by dropping the lead hand on the recovery.

execution: lead jab to face

1.

step in with front foot

raise rear heel

2.

spring-drive from rear leg as lead foot advances

3.

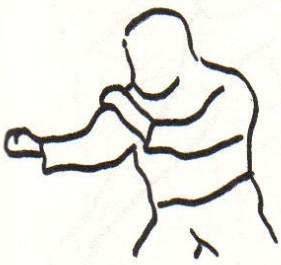
execution: lead jab to body

1.

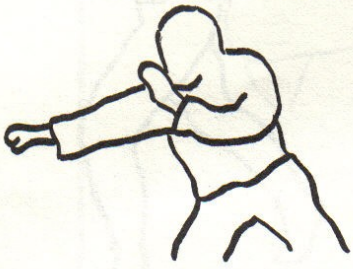
(front view)

2.

EXECUTION (Lead Jab to body): Similar to the jab to the face, except that the power of the blow is obtained through a body drop from the waist, to a position over the front foot. The greatest part of the body drop is obtained by bending the knee of the rear leg. The front leg is kept as straight as possible but may be slightly bent if opposing a shorter opponent or a croucher. The lead arm is driven straight with the shoulder on level with the midsection. The head is tucked alongside the punching arm, and the rear hand covers the face. The punching fist should land horizontally or at a slight angle. The arm should return to the body along the same plane that it was delivered.



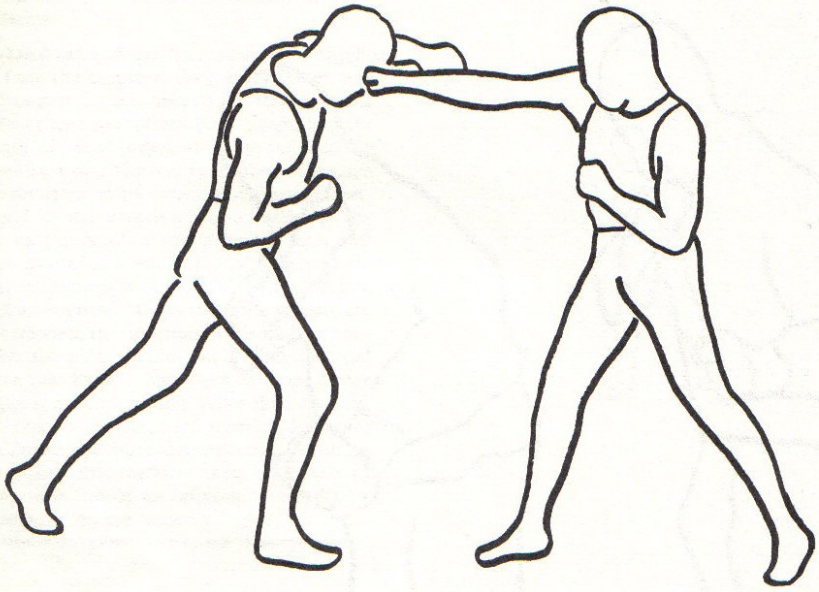
1.



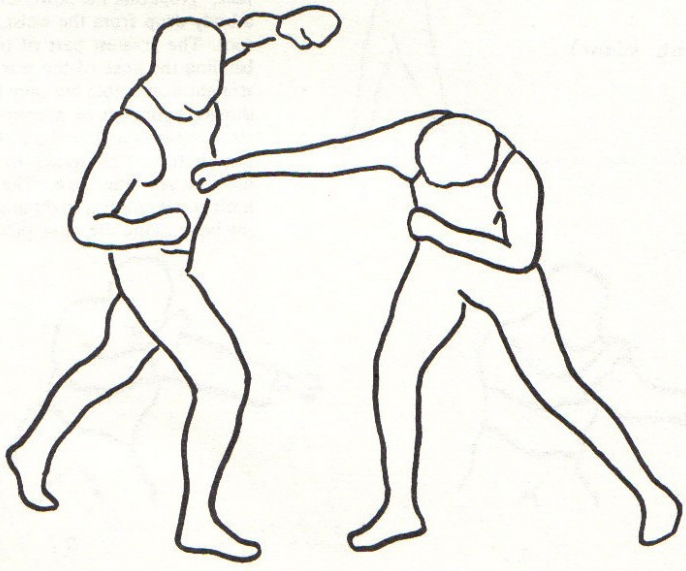
2.

(side view)

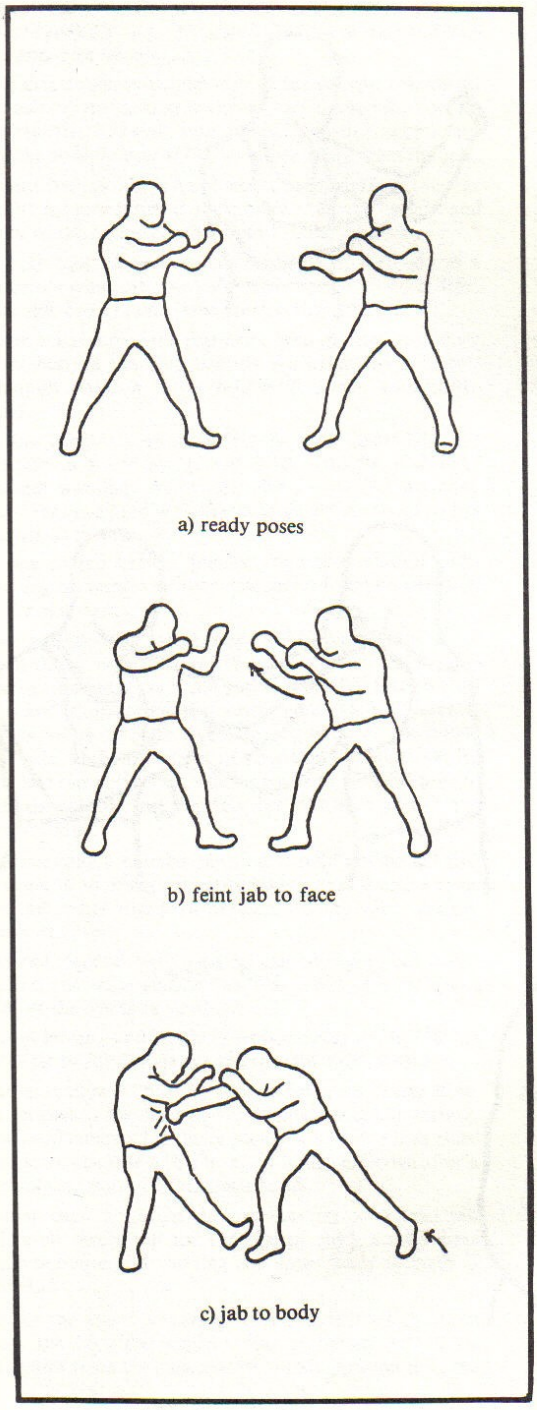
Lead Jab Applications



a) jab to face intercepts rear swing in flight



b) jab to body intercepts rear swing in flight



a) ready poses

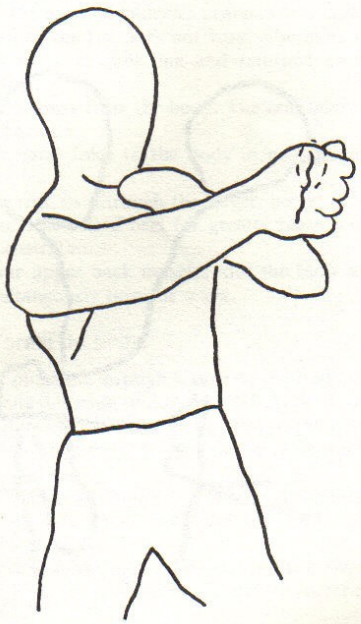
b) feint jab to face

c) jab to body

Vertical-Fist Punch

- The vertical-fist blow is delivered with the lead hand in a straight line to the target, making contact with the large top two knuckles of the vertically-held fist.
- Unlike the jab, the vertical-fist punch is not a snappy-type hit but is more of a driving attack. Once the fist reaches its mark, it is driven through forcefully rather than being retracted immediately.
- The vertical-fist is never used at arms length as is the jab, but is delivered only in tight, from five inches or less from the target.
- This technique is applicable to either the head or body. A sharp twist of the hips in the direction of the blow supplies the attack with destructive force.
- There is no need to step into the blow as is the case with the jab. Power is generated from a slight lurch forward and a forceful rotation of the waist.
- Training aids for the vertical-fist include the heavy bag, wall bag, and the round punching pad.

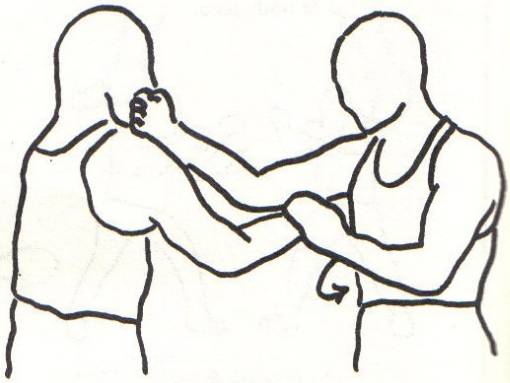
Vertical-Fist Punch



2.

1.

execution: vertical-fist punch



(to face)

(to body)

Straight Rear Thrust

- The straight rear thrust is the opposite of the lead jab. It is the heavy artillery. It should be used sparingly and only for apparent openings.
- The arm action in the delivery of the straight rear thrust is basically the same as in the delivery of the jab. You use the rear fist, however, rather than the lead. Also, you apply the straight rear thrust at closer range than the jab.
- Unlike the jab which has a loose, snappy effect, the rear thrust is more forceful since there is greater weight and body commitment concentrated behind the blow.
- For the most power, use the lead side of the body as a hinge allowing the rear side of the body to swing free. One side of the body must form a straight line.
- Upon extension of the rear arm, keep the lead arm close to the body in guarding position. Anticipate counters and maintain position for a follow-up punch with either hand.
- If you sense an opening for the rear thrust, do not hesitate in throwing it. Let it fly straight and hard without warning. Above all, aim for perfect accuracy (even more so than with the lead) since the rear hand has further to travel.
- Is one of the hardest punches due to a natural, full-twisting movement of the waist and a forceful extension of the rear arm.
- The straight rear thrust gathers its great hitting force from the allowance of distance between your rear hand and the opponent such that you obtain a full turn of your hips and complete sway of your leg and back muscles. It is this follow-through that creates power. As the punch drives in, shift the weight of your body to your rear leg and let your entire rear side swing forth with the punch. Lift the heel of the rear foot for extension and deeper penetration.
- Is essentially a counter blow. It should not be led first because in so doing the entire body turns in such a manner that many vital parts are exposed and which are difficult to cover.
- Do not depend too often on the straight rear thrust against the same stancer. Its best effects are registered against the opposite stancer.
- Avoid leading and reaching with the rear hand. Use the jab lead to find range for the straight rear thrust.
- The straight rear thrust (to face or body) is a power blow, recognized as the most powerful single punch in boxing. Is a good counter for the opponent's opposite lead since it exposes one side of his body. It is also effective after a preliminary feint with the lead hand.
- Rather than bouncing on the toes (as in a lead jab delivery), throw out the rear thrust from a solid base while bobbing and weaving the upper body to conceal and elude.
- Unlike the classical karate reverse punch which starts from the hip, the straight rear thrust of MU TAU originates from the fundamental ready position near the chin. The former method is least efficient for it exposes a large area and adds unnecessary distance to cover in its delivery.
- Guard with the front hand in this case. Hold it up and open, elbow in, protecting against the opponent's rear hand. The head is down along the punching arm for maximum protection.
- Land the fist *horizontally,* turning it a quarter revolution as it shoots out toward the target.
- In hitting this blow to the body, you should tuck your head alongside the punching arm for protection. As such, the straight rear thrust is a comparatively safe blow since you crouch as you drive in the punch, thus avoiding "hard" counters.
- When used to the body, the straight rear thrust is effective in pulling down an opponent's guard and can be employed with great success against a much taller adversary.

Fundamentals of Form

Straight Rear Thrust (to face)

1. Body weight must be shifted directly over the straight lead leg.
2. Hip and shoulder must be turned through to the centerline.
3. Drive the rear arm into complete extension.
4. At the moment of impact the knuckles are up with the thumb-side of the first turned inward. The fist should land horizontally with the force concentrated in the top two knuckles nearest the thumb.
5. The plane of the fist does not vary. The blow is delivered on a straight line and returned on a straight line.
6. All force is away from the body. The arm relaxes back to position.
7. The lead hand folds to the body in position of guard.
8. Drive the rear fist through the target, not at it.
9. Extend off the raised heel for greater reach and deeper penetration.
10. Sway your upper back muscles into the blow as you simultaneously turn the waist.

Straight Rear Thrust (to body)

1. Power is obtained through a turn of the body in the opposite direction (if punching left, turn to the right; if punching with the right, turn to the left) and at the same time a drop of the body forward over the lead leg.
2. The body drop is obtained primarily through a bend of the rear knee. The front leg is held as straight as possible.
3. As the rear shoulder approximates a position over the front foot, the rear arm is driven into forceful extension.

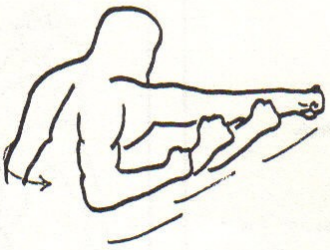
4. The body follows the arm at all times.
5. The rear arm is driven in a straight line from the shoulder to the target.
6. At the moment of impact, the fist lands horizontally.
7. The fundamental ready position must be resumed immediately.
8. In the recovery of the ready pose, the arm must follow the body. The arm must not drop at any time.
9. The lead arm is held in a position of guard, waiting and ready for any counter-punch.
10. The head is carried forward alongside the rear arm.

EXECUTION (Straight Rear Thrust to face): From the on-guard pose, twist the whole rear side of the body toward the target by rotating your hips clockwise if punching with the left fist, counter-clockwise if punching with the right. The body rotation is facilitated by pivoting on your rear foot. As the body twists, transfer the weight from the rear side of the body over a straight forward leg. Simultaneously, turn the rear arm and shoulder into the blow. At the moment of impact, keep the knuckles of the punching fist up (horizontal); protect the chin with the rear shoulder; and keep the lead hand folded near the face, for protection or in readiness for a follow-up attack. The rear foot should raise off the heel for deep penetration in the blow, and must pivot on the sole to allow a full weight shift. The side of the jaw is your target.

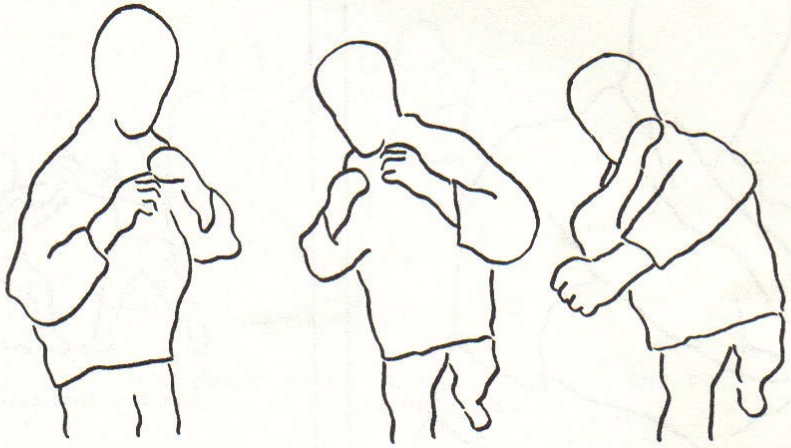
STRAIGHT REAR THRUST

EXECUTION (front view)

EXECUTION (side view)



execution: straight rear thrust to body



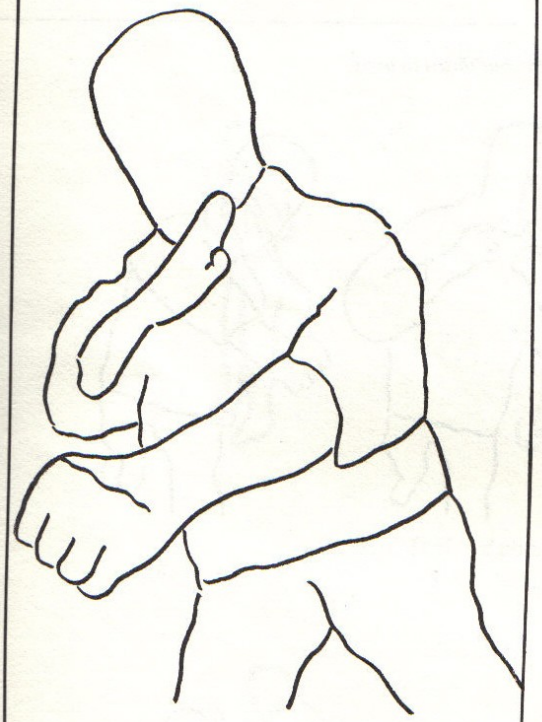
1. 2. 3.

(front view)

1. 2. 3.

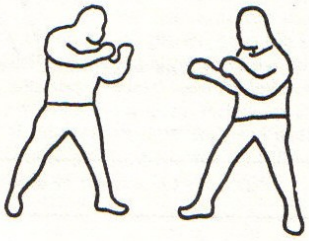
(side view)

Straight Rear Thrust to the Body

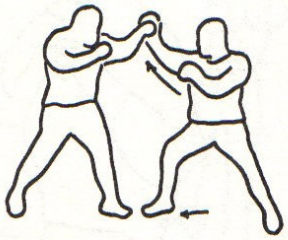


EXECUTION (Straight Rear Thrust to body): Same as to the face, except that the blow is directed lower. From the ready pose, bend the front knee slightly while keeping your rear leg flexed. Shift the weight to your lead foot by rotating the hips into the direction of the blow while pivoting on your rear foot. For added power, you can step slightly to the right (if punching with the left fist) or to the left (if punching with the right fist) as the blow is thrown. The lead hand should be drawn to the face for protection. Sink your body so the blow is delivered almost horizontal to the target.

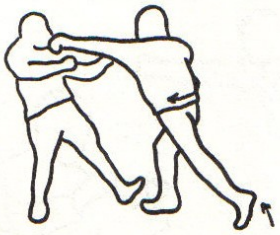
How To Use the Straight Rear Thrust



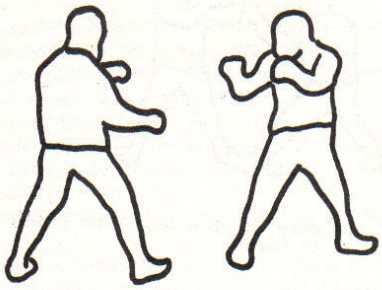
a) ready poses



b) lead hand feint to face



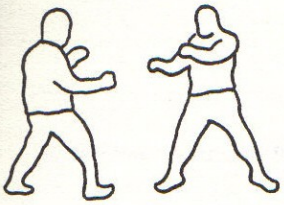
c) straight left to jaw



a) ready poses

b) upward sweep of hand as feint and to obstruct opponent's vision

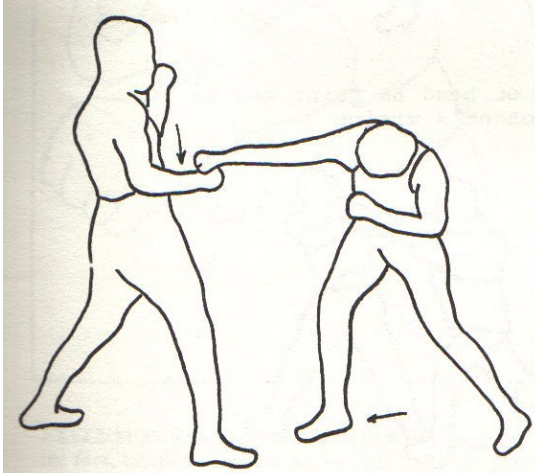
c) straight left to head



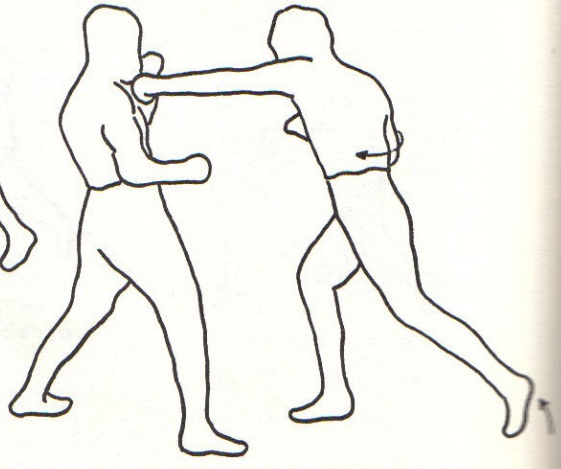
a) ready poses

b) step in with lead hand feint to face

c) straight left to body



a) lead jab feint to stomach



b) straight left to jaw

Curved Punching

It is a fact that the shortest distance between two points is the straight line. True, the straight line is most efficient but when supported by other compact angular punches, one's personal arsenal is without confinement.

For the straight-line attack to gain maximum effect, it requires extensive spacing. The bent-arm or curved blow, on the other hand, calls for close quarters for its greatest results. If initiated from too far out, curved hitting is useless and can easily be beaten to the punch by a straight blow.

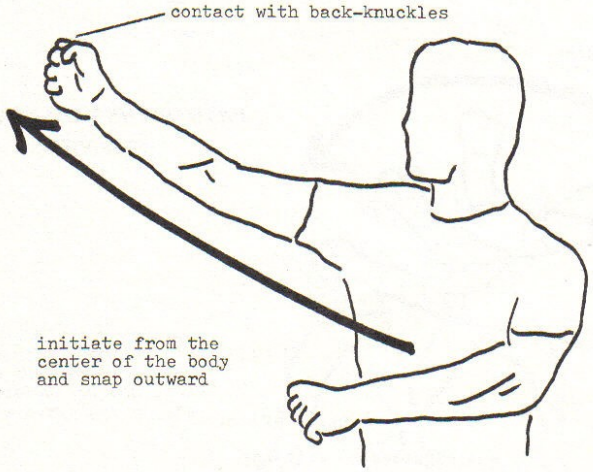
Many classical martial art styles seldom make use of bent-arm blows. Used properly, hooks and uppercuts make one's particular fighting style a more complete and unpredictable discipline. Without curved blows there are fewer possible combinations. Thus, the bent-arm blows, together with straight hitting, exhaust all the practical possibilities of striking.

There is a reason why curved blows are a part of a MU TAU-ist's tool kit. Not only are they powerful counters, but they are one means of opening up an opponent's defense. Constant hooking will often create openings for the faster and more direct straight punches.

The curved punches of MU TAU include the back-fist blow, the lead hook, the rear hook, the uppercut, and the overhand swing.

Back-Fist Blow

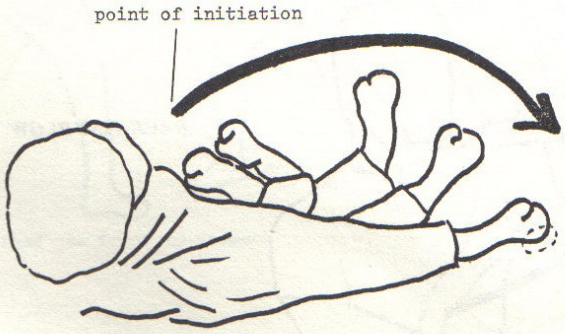
- The back-fist blow is a fast, deceptive attack of the lead hand which can have damaging effect if it lands accurately on the temple or jaw.
- Like the jab, the back-fist is a snappy hit. It is delivered from the least expected direction, from the inside out. Occasionally, it can be varied in a sideways, upward delivery from an unpredictable angle.
- Due to its angular delivery, the opponent will often have trouble defending against it. It is one of the most surprising punches in the MU TAU weaponry because it is quick, accurate, and non-telegraphic.
- The back-fist attack can be applied with a quick forward step or with a lunge from further out.
- In its delivery, you must avoid striking with the entire arm. Utilize instead only the snap of the forearm from the elbow to develop a sharp and effective technique.
- It is important to point the elbow toward the target before striking to ensure that the fist travels directly to the target, instead of traveling a longer route.
- The power of the attack comes from the inward motion of the body, the elbow snap, a well-directed forearm, and a sudden twist of the hips into the direction of the blow.
- Aim the blow to the head. It can sometimes be used to the solar plexus or spine area, but the main target is the high zone.
- Very little waist rotation is required for power in the attack. The source of might in the back-fist blow is derived from the inward spring of the body and a simultaneous forearm snap.
- Do not swing or push through once the blow reaches full extension. Like the jab, the back-fist is meant to explode on the surface.
- As with any snappy hit, the back-fist features a retraction speed that is equivalent, if not faster, than its initiation.
- The back-fist is applicable as a direct attack, counter, or as part of an immobilization. Also, it can be used as a follow-up attack with kicks that score, miss their mark, or are jammed. An instantaneous back-hand merges nicely with a leg obstruction or sweeping foot movement that unbalances the opponent.
- In a sustained flurry, do not pull back the fist too far or else you will expose yourself to the opponent's counter.



BACK-FIST BLOW

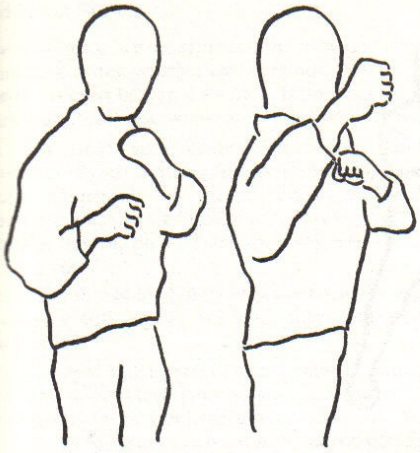
Do not withdraw the fist prior to initiation in an attempt to gain greater hitting force. This not only signals your intention to strike but also makes the leading side of your head vulnerable.

- Step in tight with your lead foot, locking your opponent's front leg, preventing any possible counterkick. Stomp on his toes, if possible, while moving in to strike. This tactic will restrict his mobility, particularly in his attempts to get away from your assault.
- Point the elbow toward the target prior to its delivery. Do not, however, lift the elbow as you strike. Keep it folded close to the body for protection of the ribs.
- Keep the wrist of the punching hand firm. Any looseness in the wrist upon impact endangers the lower arm and reduces hitting force. Remember, the only snap is from the elbow. There is no wrist snap in this blow.
- Training Aids: focuser pad, heavy bag.



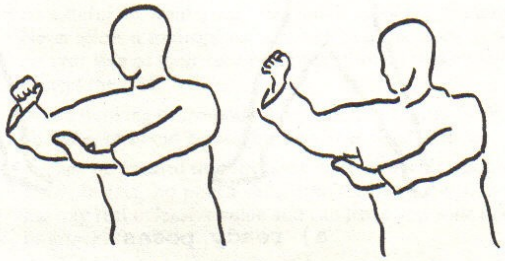
PATH OF THE BACK-FIST BLOW
(TOP VIEW)

execution: back-fist blow to head



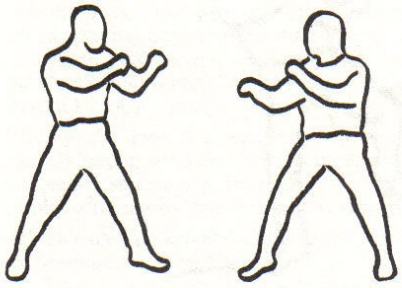
1. 2.

(front view)

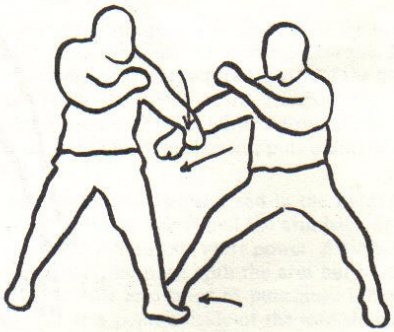


1. 2.

(side view)

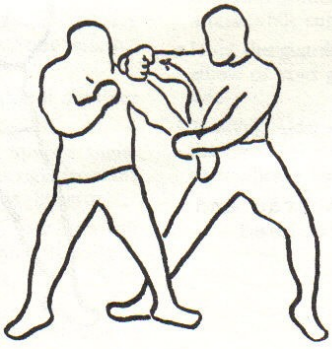


a) ready poses

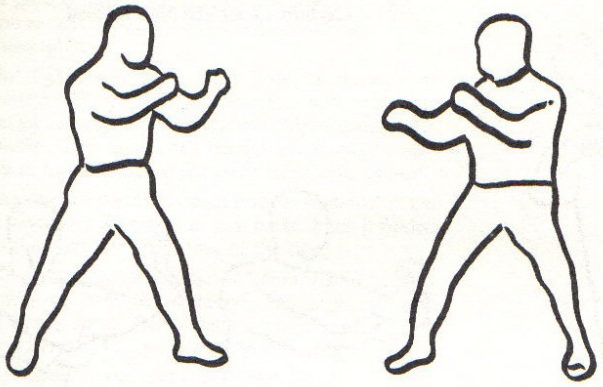


b) lead hand body feint while moving in induces opponent to block down on it

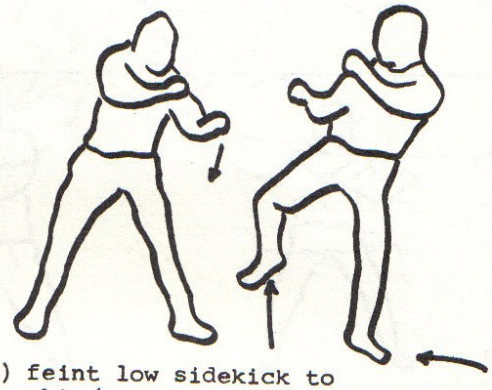
c) rear hand traps down on opponent's blocking hand while the lead hand is disengaged and converted into a back-fist to the head



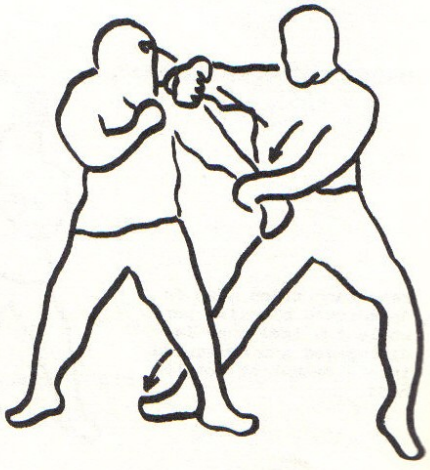
How To Use the Back-Fist Blow



a) ready poses



b) feint low sidekick to shin/knee



c) follow with trap and back-fist to head

Lead Hook Punch

- The lead hook is a short, bent-arm blow thrown off the front foot as the puncher turns his body toward the opposite direction behind the attack. If hooking off the forward right foot, you would turn your body to the left.
- As you twist your body behind the blow, you automatically are shifting into position and gaining the proper momentum for the delivery of the hook with greatest effect. For added power, throw your forward shoulder into the delivery and raise your self on the balls of both feet.
- Both knees should be slightly bent when you are in the act of delivery and just as you land, they should both be straightened.
- Keep your eyes on the point of attack when hooking to the head, and do not keep your muscles stiff. They must be relaxed to get the proper benefit out of the hook. You will find that the force will come naturally as you perfect your stance and mode of delivery.
- The lead hook is especially lethal at very close quarters where the opponent's peripheral vision is limited.
- The lead hook is used as a counter and finishing blow. It should be used wisely and carefully and only when an actual opening has been created. It is used best when going in or coming out, and is useful against the overreaching straight punch or swing.
- The lead hook is most effective at extremely close quarters (infighting) coming from the side, outside the range of vision, and around one's guard. It is also a valuable finishing blow especially after the opponent has been shaken by a hard straight blow.
- Theoretically, the hook is a head blow. However, it is also most damaging when delivered to the body, which covers a greater surface area than the head, and to the groin, which is far more difficult to protect than the face.
- Against an air-tight peekaboo defense, launch lead hooks to force openings for other punches.
- Raise the lead heel outward so that the body can pivot to get the hips, back, and shoulders into the blow for crushing force.
- Use the lead hook after making another initial movement like hitting out with a jab lead or faking a rear cross to the body.
- The sharper the bend in the elbow, the more explosive and stronger the hook. Allow it to swing freely into this position.
- Mimimize the curvature of the hook so that it does not become a wild, swinging haymaker.
- The fist reaches the target from a slight upward angle. There is no twist of the fist; the forearm is rigid from the elbow to the knuckles without any bend at the wrist.
- Swivel on the ball of the lead foot so that your blow will have better reach and faster follow-through. Drop slightly to the opposite side to gain more hitting weight and to safeguard yourself.
- Deliver the hook with a looseness together with proper pivoting of the feet and body. Shift your body weight from the outside in to propel the most torque.
- Bob and weave in conjunction with the hook.
- The power in the blow comes from the shifting of weight at the moment of impact.
- The most effective hook is a short blow, one that barely travels eight to ten inches. The power is generated not from the arm but from the entire body.
- Be careful to keep your rear hand up while hooking. Never allow it to drop! Keep it high to act as a shield for the rear side of your face while the elbow is tucked in to protect the ribs.
- When hooking to the body, keep the chin behind the lead shoulder to avoid beiong hit by a rear hand counter.
- It must be stressed that the hook is never a wide, looping blow. In fact, no punch should be. Such a blow seldom has any real offensive value and can leave you wide open to attack.
- The lead hook is an effective counterblow against both a jab and a straight karate punch. As an offensive weapon, the hook has pulverizing force.
- Trap (with rear hand) and hook (with lead) from outside of opponent's leading leg to avoid a possible knee counter.
- Do not step forward with the hook. Instead, pivot and lurch the body upward.
- When starting a hook, pivot off the balls of the feet and dip slightly from the waist for additional torque. Finish the pivot and move the entire forward side of the body as the punch lands. At the moment of impact, your fist, elbow, and shoulders should all be on one plane. This, plus the pivot and waist movement, puts dramatic power into the hook.
- Avoid telegraphing!! Start and end in the fundamental position of readiness. Never pull the arm back or lower the fist in an attempt to gain more power. Always follow the movement of the waist with the arm but be careful not to "cock" the arm prior to punching. Initiate the punching fist at a point outside of the lead shoulder so that the arm need not be drawn back.
- Unleash the hook from a solid base while weaving the head and shoulders. By combining upper body mobility with firm ground contact, you can conceal the impending attack while enhancing the power in the hook.
- Hold the guarding hand high to shield your face. The elbow of your guarding arm protects your ribs on that side.
- Training Aids: Develop zing in the lead hook by hitting the speed bag (platform model); increase hooking power on the heavy bag or focuser pad worn by a partner.

Fundamentals of Form

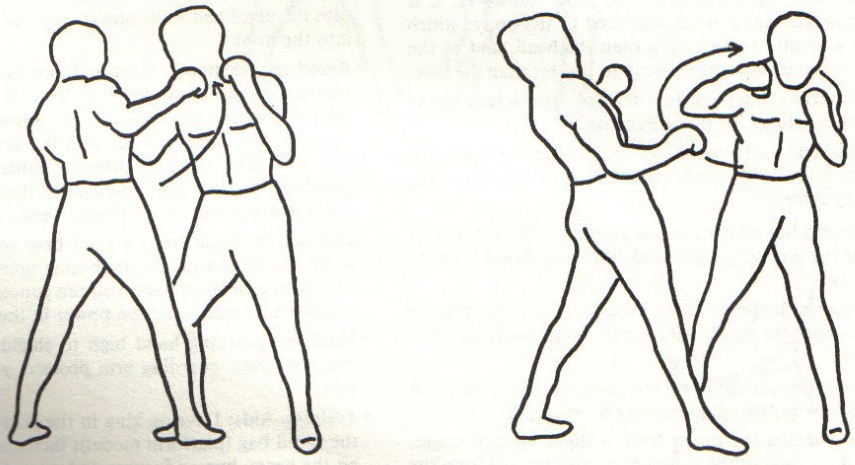
Lead Hook Punch

1. Turn the lead hip and shoulder through to the centerline, away from the lead arm which retains its position.
2. Turn the lead hip and shoulder through to the centerline, away from the lead arm which retains its position.
3. Turn the body outward and whip the lead hand in a short arc.
4. Drive through the mark, not toward it.
5. The lead hand is not lowered or "telegraphed" in any manner.
6. Pivot toward your opponent on the ball of your front foot.
7. Knuckles are pointing out, palm inward at the moment of impact. the thumb-side of the hand is up.
8. The rear hand is carried as guard near the lead shoulder, shielding the face from any return head shots.

EXECUTION (Lead Hook Punch to head): For the lead hook to the head, hold the lead arm rigid and slightly bent at the elbow. Begin the blow from the ready pose with the fist positioned at a point outside of the lead shoulder. Raise the elbow slightly to make it possible for the lead hand to rotate as it moves toward the target. Besides adding power to the blow, the rotation makes it easier to hit with the striking surface of the hand. At the moment of impact, the palm of the punching fist is facing inward; the thumb side of the hand is up. In order to get the weight of the body into the blow, shift the weight from one side of the body to the other (right to left if punching with the right fist; left to right if punching with the left fist) at the moment of impact by pivoting on the ball of the front foot and keeping the rear side of the body stationary.

EXECUTION (Lead Hook Punch to body): The lead hook to the body is delivered in much the same manner as the lead hook to the head. At impact, the palm of the fist is facing upward and the lead elbow is held closer to the body.

Lead Right Hook Punch to jaw



position of the arm
for the left hook
to the head

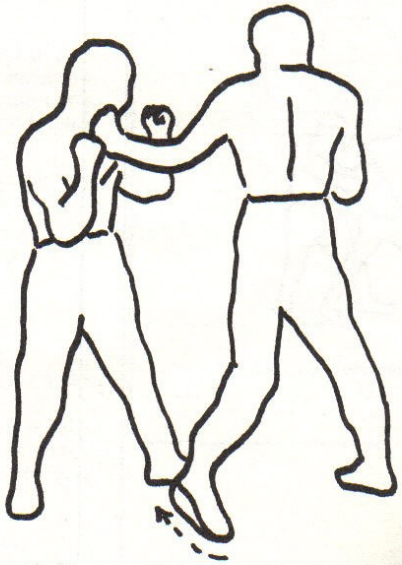
EXECUTION:

lift heel

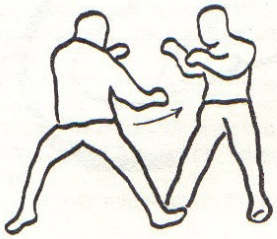
pivot

LEAD HOOK

(back view)



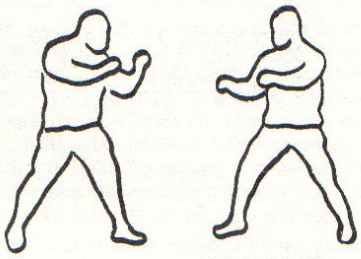
How To Use the Lead Hook Punch



a) jab feint to body

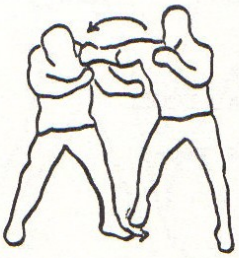
b) start hook as opponent drops guard

c) complete hook to jaw



a) ready poses

b) half-committed body shot as feint (rear hand)



c) lead hook punch to head

Angular Delivery of Lead Hook

Rear Hook

(to head)

(to body)

Rear Hook

- The rear hook is a valuable weapon in close to either head or body of an opposite stancer. It is used freely during in-fighting and clinching. It can be used to the kidneys of a crouching fighter who tucks his arms in tightly, leaving his kidney area wide open to this type of blow.
- Contact is made with the fist held vertically, thumb side of the hand up.

Fundamentals of Form

Rear Hook

1. Shift the weight over a straight lead leg.
2. Turn the rear hip and shoulder through to the centerline.
3. Raise the rear elbow and with the arm in a half-bent position, whip it in an arc toward the target.
4. At impact, the knuckles should be turned out, thumb-side of the hand up.
5. The wrist must be kept straight.
6. The lead arm is held in guarding position.

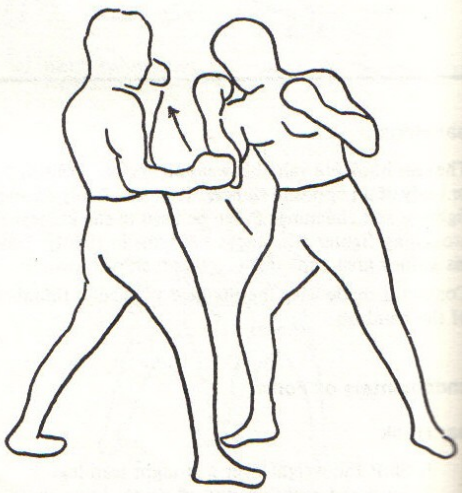
Uppercut

- The uppercut, like the hook, is only effective at close range. It is a blow frequently called upon during in-fighting action. In essence, the uppercut is actually a form of the hook, except that it is landed upward instead of sideways. It is a short, bent-arm punch whose power derives from concentrating the full weight of the body into the delivery.
- The uppercut is not employed as often as the other basic punches since its effectiveness depends, to a large extent, on how much the opponent crouches or leans forward in his ready position.
- The uppercut can be thrown with either hand. There are many opportunities for the punch once you manage to get inside.
- Uppercuts are used principally as defensive blows against crouchers, and as counters. They are short, bent-arm punches carrying considerable power.
- Avoid leading with an uppercut. Basically, it is a counterblow for head-down charges and wild swinging assaults. Reserve the uppercut primarily for crouching fighters who constantly press forward and stalk their prey, not faster combatants who stand upright all the time and rely on straight leads.
- In its delivery, the puncher dips his body to the right if hitting with his right fist, and to the left if hitting with his left fist. The legs are bent before making contact and then straightened suddenly as the punch is shot in.
- When executing a lead uppercut, your target area should be the opponent's body not his chin. Missing an uppercut to the chin leaves you in a very vulnerable position. Also there is greater chance of scoring to the body than the chin as there is more surface area to hit.
- The uppercut has no definite footwork per se. Unlike the jab or back-fist, there is no stride forward as the blow is delivered. Instead, there is the pivot (a slight one, to be sure), and the simultaneous straightening of the legs.
- Never throw the uppercut from a stiff, straight-legged position. There is very little power in an uppercut delivered from this position, and it usually leaves the thrower in a situation to be countered.
- Propel all of your weight upward as you hit with this blow. If punching with the lead right fist, use your left hand to immobilize the opponent's front arm by grasping his shoulder. Better yet, grab his hair or behind his neck and jerk him forward into an uppercut. This action doubles the striking force.
- The uppercut usually follows a lead jab and occasionally, a lead hook.
- Use the rear hand uppercut against the opposite stancer whose body is more vulnerable to your rear hand than your lead.
- A fighter who favors the uppercut can be countered if he can be faked into committing his blow. Use a short, fast rear hand or hook for the counter.
- Block the uppercut with the forearms. The best defense for the uppercut, however, is to avoid it in the first place by not crouching or leaning forward.
- Although you begin the uppercut by deceptively lowering your fist, you must be careful not to signal your intent to deliver the punch itself. Any sort of telegraphing at all will result in successful blocks or counters by the opponent. Therefore, the increase in knee flexion, the dip of the body, the pivot, and the lowering of the punching fist must be fluidly integrated for quick and deceptive delivery.

Fundamentals of Form

Lead/Rear Uppercuts

1. Bend the body slightly forward and directly to the side.
2. The punching arm should be in a half-bent position, parallel to the floor, palm up.
3. The body is then pivoted to the centerline.
4. Sink in the knees.
5. Suddenly straighten the legs and whip the arm upward toward the solar plexus or chin.

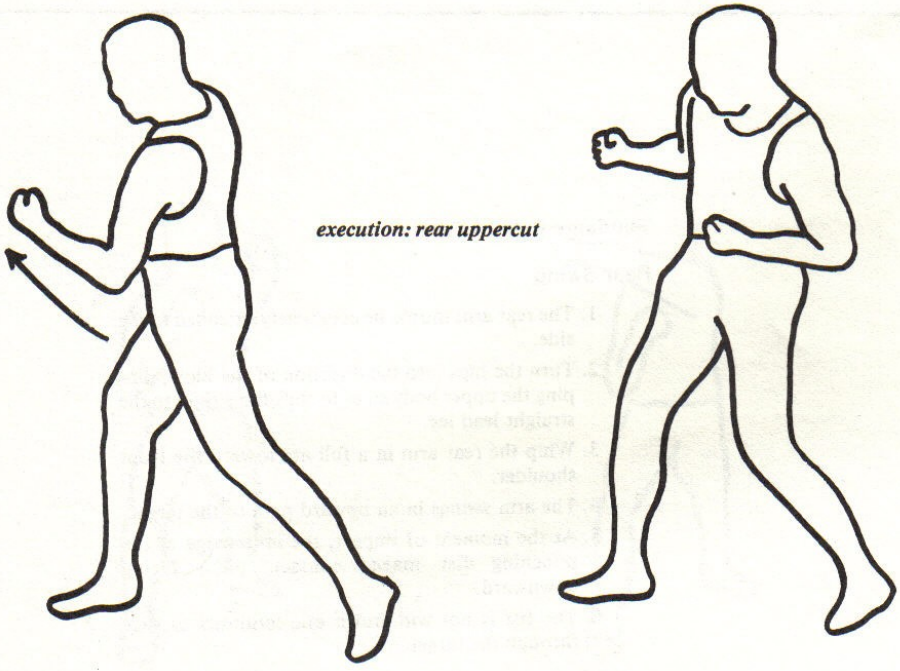


Lead Uppercut to chin

Uppercut Punch

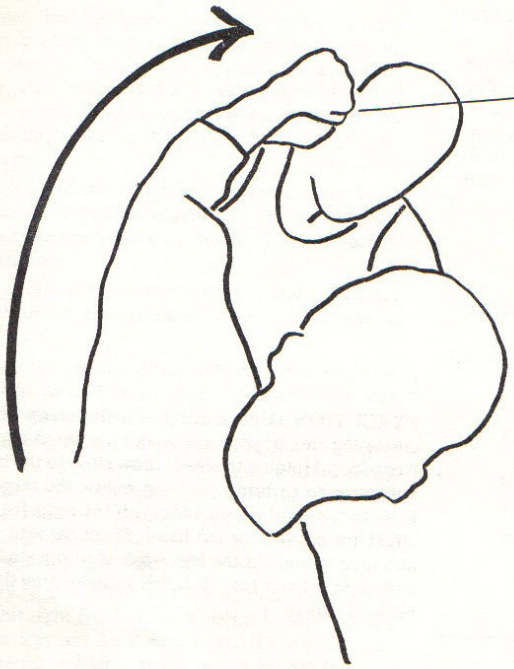
Rear Uppercut to body

EXECUTION (Uppercut): From the ready position, increase the flex in your knees and get set to pivot on your front foot. Holding the lead elbow close to the body, lower your arm so to bring your fist below the target. Dip the body to the right if punching with the right fist and to the left if hitting with the left hand. Shoot the lead fist upward and then straighten the legs while pivoting slightly off the ball of your front foot. It is this straightening that gives the blow its power.



execution: rear uppercut

2. 1.



Rear Swing to Head

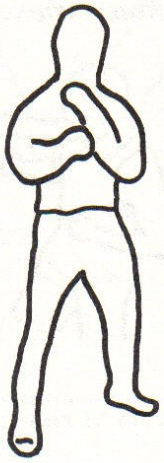
- The swing employs the rear fist in a wide round-house delivery. It is a long overhand movement featuring a loose, free-arm delivery with the full weight of the body behind it.
- The swing follows a jab to the body. Never lead with it!!

Fundamentals of Form

Rear Swing

1. The rear arm should be completely extended to the side.
2. Turn the hips into the direction of the blow, dipping the upper body so as to shift the weight to the straight lead leg.
3. Whip the rear arm in a full arc toward the front shoulder.
4. The arm swings in an upward path to the target.
5. At the moment of impact, the inner edge of the punching fist makes contact, palm facing downward.
6. The fist is not withdrawn but continues to slice through the target.

execution: rear swing to head



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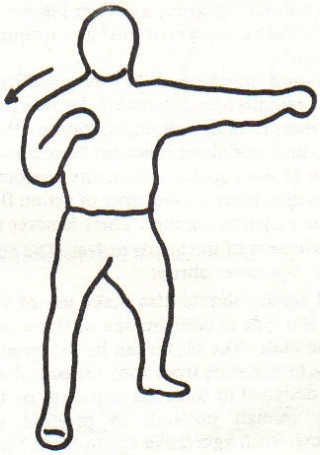

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Combination Punching

Once a fighter has mastered the defensive skills for the single blows, the need for a better offense is quite apparent. It is difficult to score with a single blow against a fighter with an air-tight defense. As a result, combination punches are employed to press the action, overwhelming him with a terrific onslaught. By combining successive blows in a natural sequence, a heavier burden is put on the defense. Effective combinations get through even the tightest guard.

Combination punching is the heavy artillery, requiring the utmost rapidity. Each blow of the sequence has to be delivered sharply and without hesitation. Proficiency in delivering the single blows is needed before one attempts to throw each of the punches within any combination.

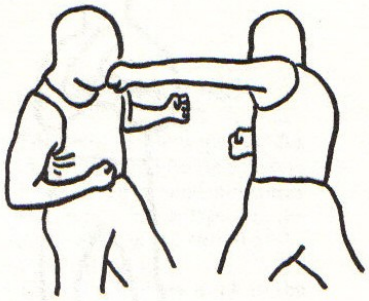
In all combinations the sequence of action flows naturally from one punch to another. There is never need for any abrupt movement of the hands or feet. The action is lightning quick, but never abrupt.

A good fighter should also make use of sustained hitting. This is a type of combination or flurry employing the exact same blow. The blows can be delivered to the same target area or can shift from zone to zone. A sustained offensive is designed to force the opponent on the defensive producing enough pressure to prohibit an effective counterblow. Such aggressive action limits the opponent's chance of recovery. It is best to use sustained leads against a slow-moving opponent, a flat-footed fighter, or an exhausted rival.

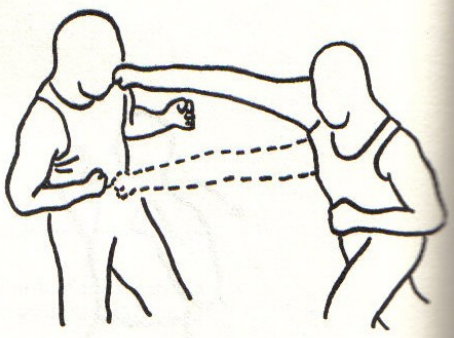
Examples:

1. Jab/Rear Thrust
   a) jab to face/rear thrust to face
   b) jab to face/rear thrust to body
   c) jab to body/rear thrust to face
2. Jab/Lead Hook
   a) jab to face/lead hook to jaw
   b) jab to face/lead hook to ribs
   c) jab to stomach/lead hook to head
3. Jab/Rear Hook
4. Jab/Rear Swing
5. Jab/Uppercut
6. Lead Hook/Uppercut
7. Jab/Rear Thrust/Lead Hook
   a) jab to face/rear thrust to face/high lead hook
   b) jab to face/rear thrust to body/high lead hook
   c) jab to face/rear thrust to face/body hook
   d) jab to body/rear thrust to face/hook to jaw
8. Jab/Lead Hook/Rear Thrust
   a) jab to face/body hook/rear thrust to jaw
   b) jab to body/hook to jaw/rear thrust to head
9. Rear Thrust/Lead Hook
   a) rear thrust to body/hook to head
   b) rear thrust to face/hook to jaw

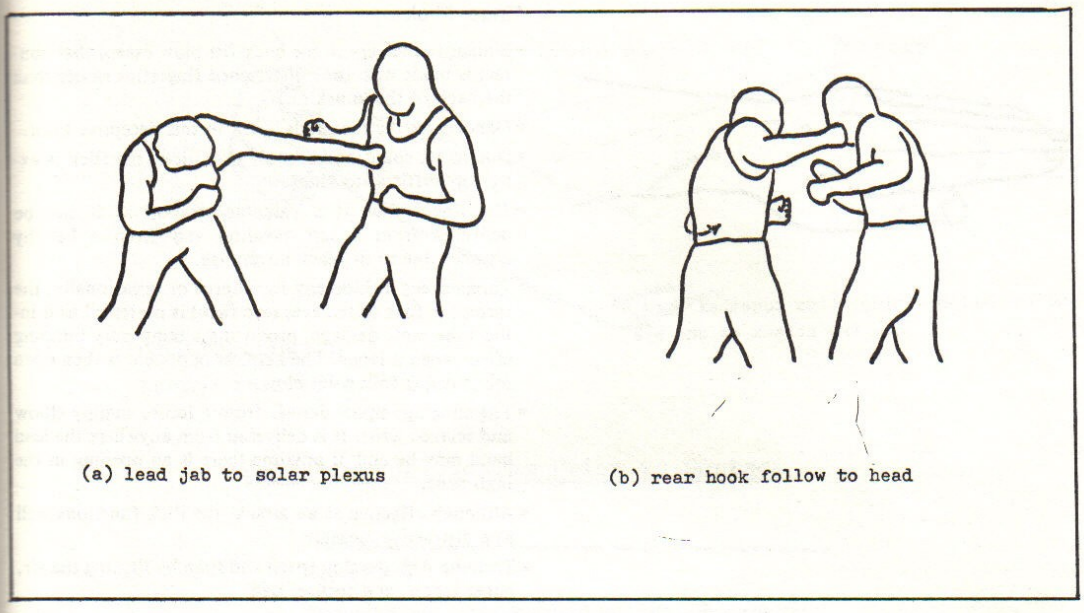
COMBINATION PUNCHING



(a) lead jab to face



(b) rear thrust follow to face or body



(a) lead jab to solar plexus

(b) rear hook follow to head

Other Hand Blows

Besides straight and angular punching, the MU TAU weaponry includes open-hand blows such as the leading finger stab, the finger flick, and the palm hook. Another hand technique discussed in this section is the downward hammer which is not a primary MU TAU attack but is employed as a finishing stroke as it was in the ancient Greek pankration.

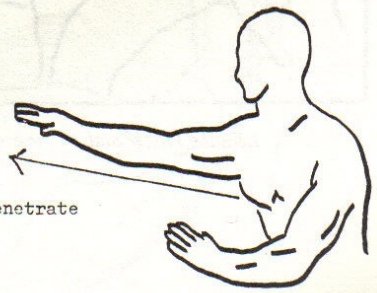
Leading Finger Stab

- The leading finger stab is directed at the eyes and, therefore, is a most effective attack in self-defense. It acts as a constant threat to the opponent because:

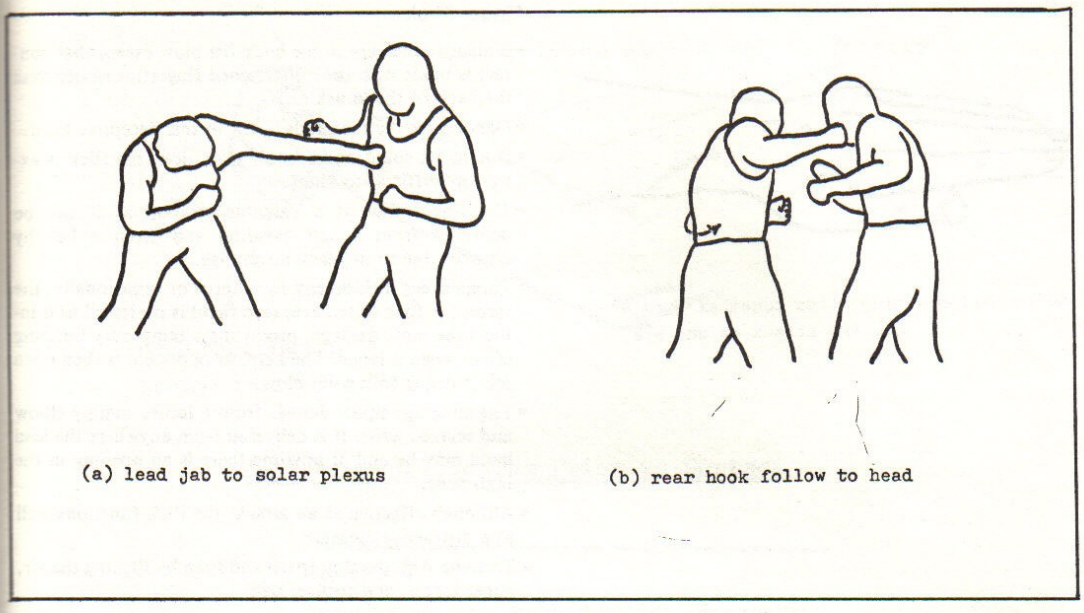
  1) it is the longest hand weapon (compare reach of extended fingers to that of straight fist)
  2) it is the fastest hand weapon requiring little preparatory motion to be effective
  3) it can temporarily or permanently blind any opponent regardless of size or strength

- The stab to the eyes must be thrusted ahead with speed and precision. Accuracy is the key to this technique!!
- Develop sustained eye stab attacks as well as efficient single strikes. Unless you are lightning fast and accurate, one hit may be avoided by a worthy opponent. However, an immediate follow with a second or even a third stab should catch him.
- The speed of a highly-developed finger stab is such that it can be felt without having been seen. Relate the motion to the striking action of a cobra: hitting without warning.
- The most essential ingredient to be developed in the finger stab is accuracy since great strength is not really needed to blind an enemy.
- The finger stab is the most vicious technique in the MU TAU arsenal. Therefore, attack the eyes only in life-or-death situations.
- The finger stab should be delivered at arms length from the adversary. In close, a slight variation of the finger stab, the two-finger poke, is used. Instead of aiming at one eye as does the finger stab at longer range, the poke snaps out quickly to both eyes of the opponent. Hit out quickly and recover immediately.
- Training Aids: Toughen the fingertips of the hand by thrusting them into a bucket filled with sand, beans, or gravel; to enhance speed, strike at the paper target or flail the air, always performing the technique with good form.

LEADING EYE STAB



straight to penetrate



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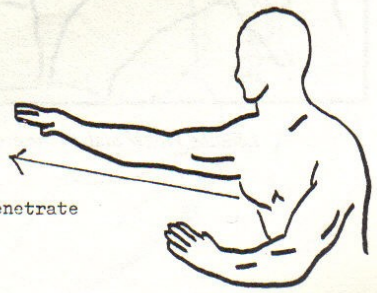
LEADING EYE STAB

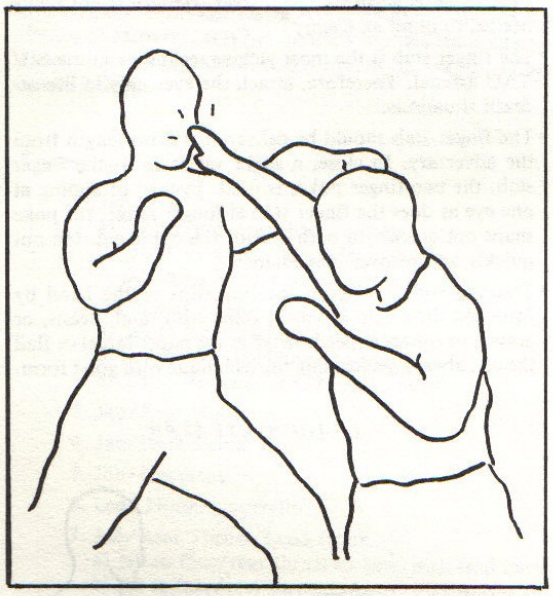


straight to penetrate

Hand Formation - fingertips together form spear aim the attack at one eye

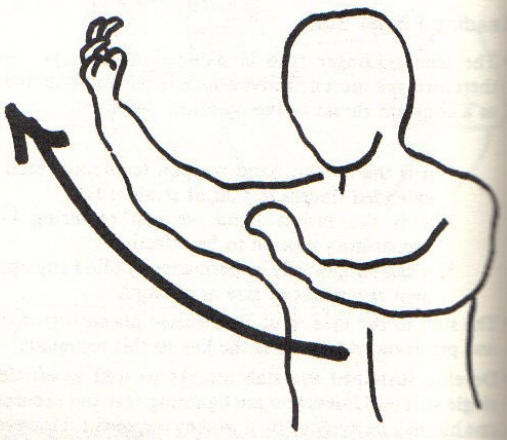
Finger Flick

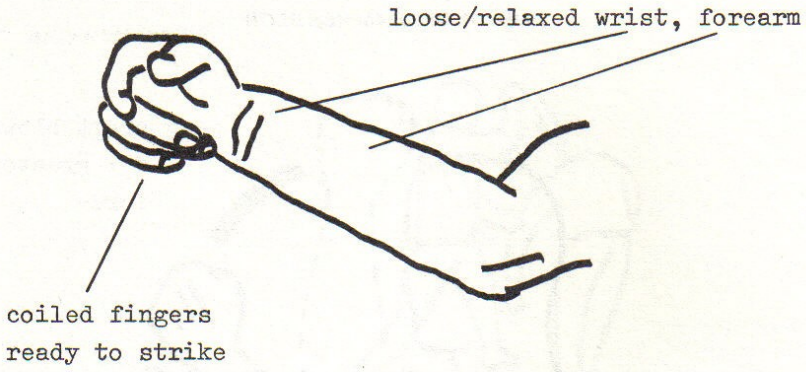
- Similar in delivery to the back-fist blow except that contact is made with the outstretched fingertips rather than the back of the knuckles.
- Dancing on the toes adds spark to this deceptive blow.
- Due to its speed and ease of execution, the flick is extremely difficult to block.
- The finger flick is a valuable weapon as it can be delivered from a safe position and from a healthy distance due to its reach advantage.
- Target areas include any facial area or occasionally, the throat. A flick to the eyes (eye flick) is preferred as it inflicts the most damage, producing a temporary blinding effect when it lands. The helpless opponent is then open for crushing follow-up blows.
- The stinging impact derives from a loose, snappy elbow and relaxed wrist. It is delivered from anywhere the lead hand may be and at anytime there is an opening in the high zone.
- Although effective as an attack, the flick functions well as a distractive measure.
- Training Aid: develop speed and snap by flicking the air, paper target, and focuser pad.



Leading Finger Stab to the eyes

FINGER FLICK



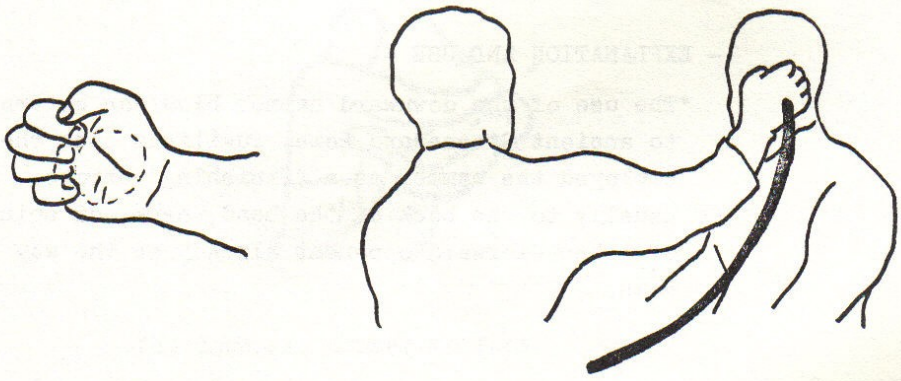


Hand/Arm Positioning Prior to Contact

Palm Hook

- Simply a fast, open-hand hook that hits with the palm or heel of the open hand.
- The palm hook is used to shoot in behind the opponent's rear hand guard. It can be delivered with either hand to the head.
- In comparison to the lead hook punch, the lead palm hook is looser, wider, and less bent at the elbow in its delivery.
- A most lethal palm hook is one that smashes into the eardrum of an opponent, causing a temporary loss of balance and possible unconsciousness.
- Training Aids: focuser pad, heavy bag.

STRIKING SURFACE OF PALM HOOK



DOWNWARD HAMMER BLOW

start blow from here for greater downward force
*strike downward with the whole body, not just the arm!!!
hit with the side-edge of clenched fist

- EXPLANATION AND USE -

*The use of the downward hammer blow can be traced to ancient Greece and Rome. Pugilists back then employed the hammer as a "finishing" stroke, usually to the back of the head, neck, or spine of a bent-forward opponent already on the way down.

APPLICATIONS

(a) downward hammer to base of head/neck

(b) downward hammer to back/spine

(c) downward hammer to face

THE FOOT

A pankratiast prided himself on skillful kicking. High kicks, however, were sparsely used. The Greeks regarded low kicking and sweeping the legs from under an opponent as the best means of foot attack. From vase paintings, there is evidence that a direct kick to the lower stomach was popular, and a low circular swipe using the hardened instep of the rear foot was employed frequently. A pankratiast never attempted a kick to the face or head unless his opponent was down on his hands and knees, too weakened to block or catch the kick.

The kick is considered a best means of attack in MU TAU. MU TAU practitioners probably employ more foot techniques than any other offensive tool in their arsenal. The legs are the longest and strongest weapons, the shod foot is the hardest striking point, and a kick can be aimed at more target areas of the body than the hand, elbow, or knee.

Kicking must be applied in conjunction with arm maneuvers because, regardless of the ingenuity of the leg movement, it must be seconded by the feinting of the arms to divert the opponent's attention away from the legs, causing openings for the kick. Although kicks aimed below the belt can be delivered as a direct attack, kicks to the body and head are usually preceded by a false hand action.

Kicking power is based on momentum (mass times velocity). This means that in order to exert the greatest kicking force on a target, you must propel your whole body behind the kick at the highest speed. Such an action maximizes the impact in the shortest possible time.

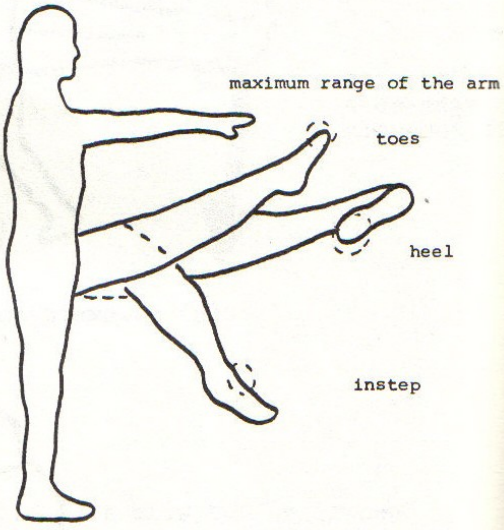
Kicks in MU TAU can be executed with a snap from the knee or with a full-powered thrust. The snappy kick must be thrown with as much speed as possible and then withdrawn even faster. A quick withdrawal prevents the opponent from grasping the leg and allows an immediate return to a more stable position, ready for the next movement. The action in a snappy kick can be related to that of a boxer's flickering jab. The effect of the kick is similar but much more damaging.

A thrust kick, on the other hand, imparts uncanny force. The movement involved is light and fast upon initiation with full concentration of maximum power through the foot at the moment of impact. Whereas a snap kick explodes on the surface, the thrusted kick is driven deep within the target area. The kicking foot must hit its mark at the moment the leg is fully extended and exerting optimum power. If the foot contacts either too soon or too late, the resulting reaction will push the foot back toward the kicker instead of through the target. There is full body commitment in thrust kicking to obtain the deepest penetration without disturbing balance. Thrusting a kick does not mean pushing it out. Pushing a kick involves bending the leg at the kneejoint and forcing it out straight by extending the leg using leg action alone. To thrust a kick, one uses his hips to drive the kick ahead. Instead of mere leg force, the entire weight of the body is employed.

The foot-fighting arsenal of MU TAU consists of six leg maneuvers. The primary kicks are the downward sidekick, the upward sidekick, and the hook kick. Other kicks include the leading straight kick, reverse hooking heel, and the roundhouse kick. As with the basic hand techniques, there are numerous variations of these kicks, both for upright fighting and defense from the ground.

Pertinent Points on MU TAU Kicking

1. Kicking is performed primarily with the lead leg. The rear leg is rarely used for kicking in this art.
2. In kicking, one foot remains in firm contact with the ground. The so-called flying or jumping kicks are never used.
3. To achieve maximum effect, kick not only with the leg but with the whole body. Twisting the hips forward during the kick and propelling the weight of the body with an inward skip or lunge help accomplish this.
4. All kicks are practical and direct. The flashy spin or twisting-type kicks are never attempted in a fight nor practiced by the MU TAU-ist.
5. Kicks can be straight or circular; snappy or thrusting; low, medium, or high.
6. For practice purposes, kick as high as you can. In actual combat, however, the best kicks are low, especially to the shin and knee.



STRIKING RANGE OF THE LEG

7. There are three prerequisites for effective kicking: strength, flexibility, and economy. The first is developed by running, the second by stretching, and the third by sparring to find the simplest, most direct route to your opponent.

8. Kicking makes use of body slants for the most dynamic sense of leverage. Leverage in kicking ensures the best balance, height, and power.
9. Balance is essential to the science of kicking. For maximum kicking power, try to develop the habit of leaning the body into the kick to keep the center of gravity firmly over the supporting leg. *Never* lean away since even if contact is made, much of the force will be lost due to improper weight distribution.

The Primary Kicks

Downward Sidekick

- In MU TAU, the first line of attack or defense is the downward sidekick to the shin or knee. The opponent's forward leg is considered a primary target since it is closest to you, and is exposed and difficult to protect. Furthermore, it allows you to maintain a secure distance in delivering the kick which has crippling effect with one well-placed blow.
- The kick is an explosive, pushing-type thrust which is most useful as a diversionary tactic or in conjunction with hand strikes. It can also be applied as a direct attack, a simple counter, or leg check.
- The advantages of the downward sidekick over hand blows are:

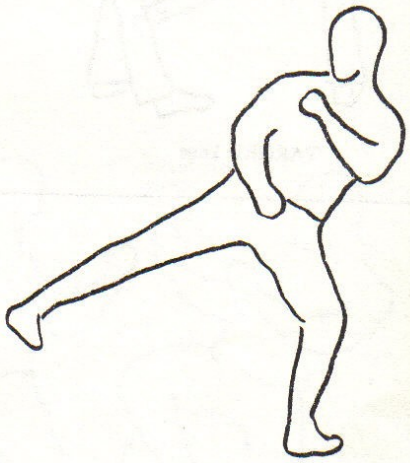
  1) greater reach allowing a safer distance from which to attack.
  2) more damage can be registered with the shod foot as compared to the bare fist.
  3) element of surprise: most opponents are weak in low-zone defense, expecting head and body shots.
  4) pack greater force (the low kick carries treble the power of hits).

- The advantages of the downward sidekick over higher kicks are:

  1) more force can be concentrated behind low kicks.
  2) involves less preparatory action to attain speed and destructive force.
  3) closer to targets (simplifies initiation).
  4) requires less effort to kick low than to kick high (lower musculature demands more of the cardiovascular system in high kicking).
  5) is faster due to proximity of targets.
  6) requires less handwork for feinting.
  7) less prone to being grabbed.

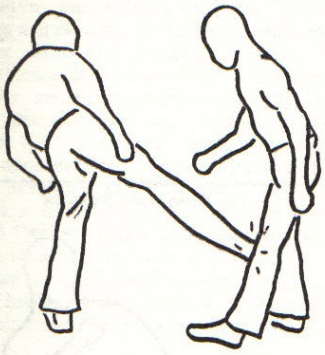
- The downward sidekick is both offensive and defensive in application. Employed as a defensive "stop-hit", it is used to intercept the attacker's kick at the lower leg during his preparation of attack. It can also intercept any oncoming punch by hitting out before the blow can reach you. This is a case of using offense as defense.
- One of the greatest features of the downward sidekick is that it takes the most direct route to its target (the shortest distance between two points is the straight line).

The Downward Sidekick

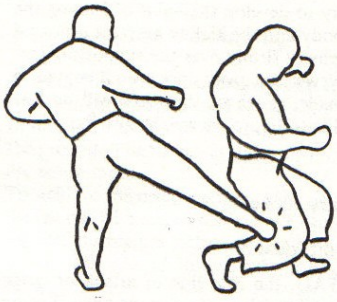


EXECUTION (Low Downward Sidekick): From the ready position with the lead foot turned inward, do a quick advance, sliding in the rear foot just behind your front foot. Simultaneously lift your lead leg, bending it slightly at the knee. Thrust your foot obliquely and downward while twisting your hips strongly in the direction of the blow. Flex the ankle down so that the outside edge of the foot makes contact. Keep your upper body out of attacking range by leaning away from the opponent. This will cause any hand counter to fall short. The rear leg should be bent at the knee to provide good balance in the delivery of the kick.

LOW DOWNWARD SIDEKICK

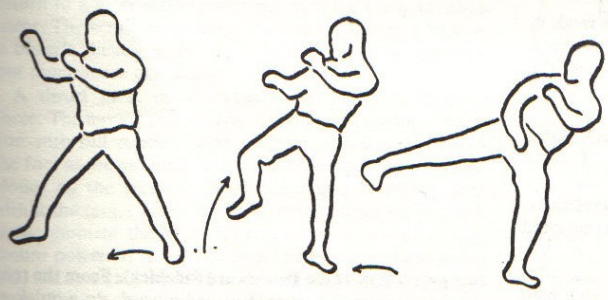


TARGET: knee



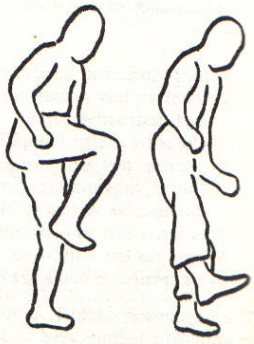
TARGET: behind knee

execution: downward sidekick



1. 2. 3.

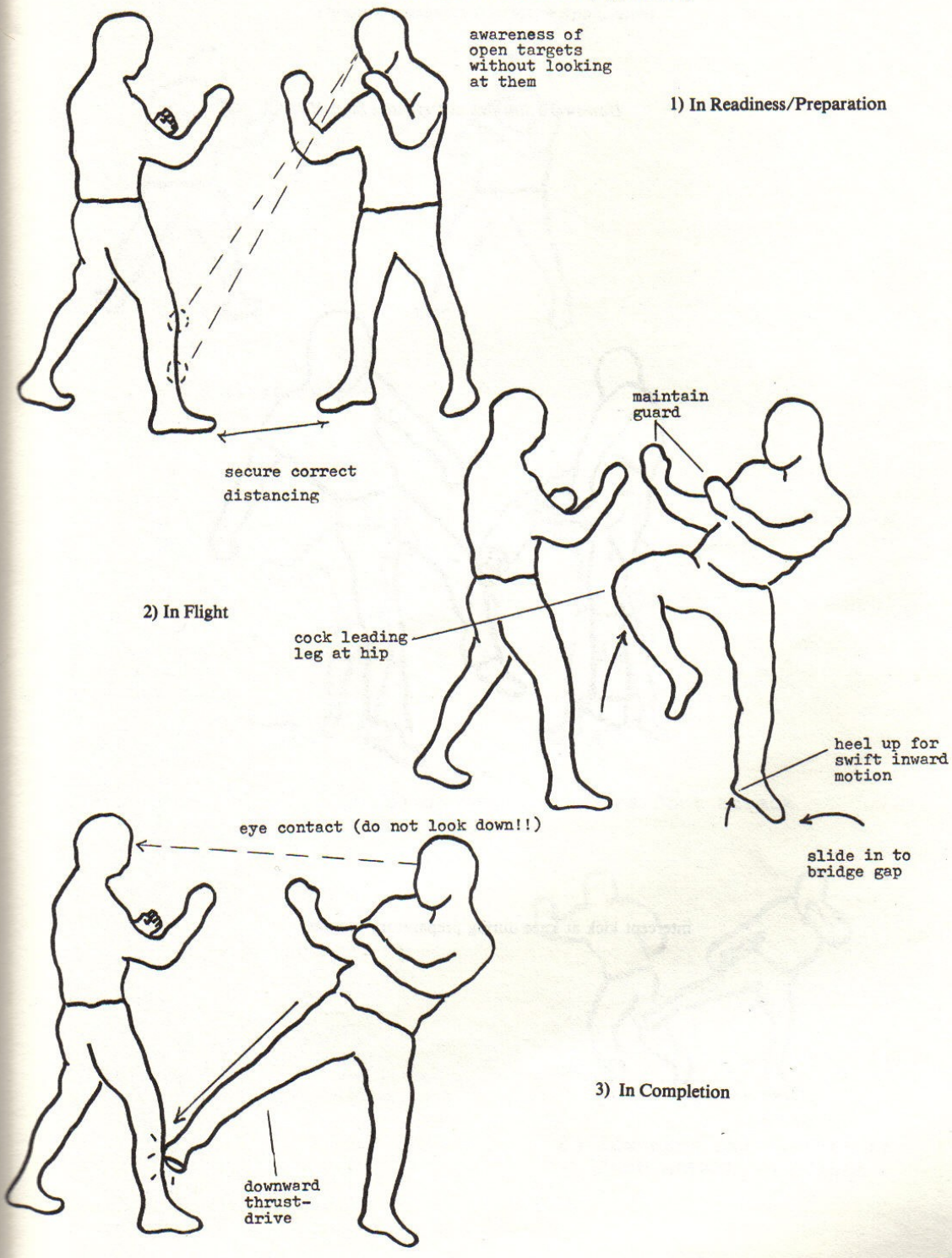
(side view)



1. 2.

(front view)

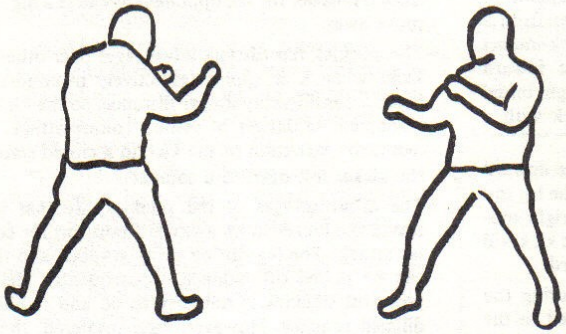
THE LEADING LOW SIDEKICK (Application)


awareness of open targets without looking at them
1) In Readiness/Preparation
secure correct distancing
maintain guard
2) In Flight
cock leading leg at hip
heel up for swift inward motion
slide in to bridge gap
eye contact (do not look down!!)
3) In Completion
downward thrust-drive

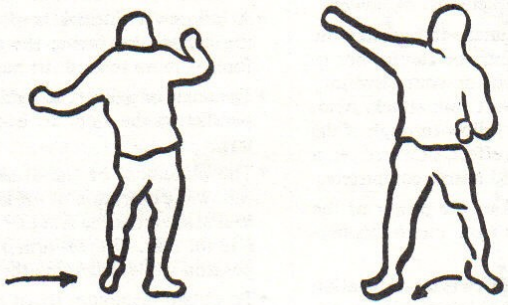
Downward Sidekick as Defensive Stop-Hit

intercept kick at knee during preparatory motion

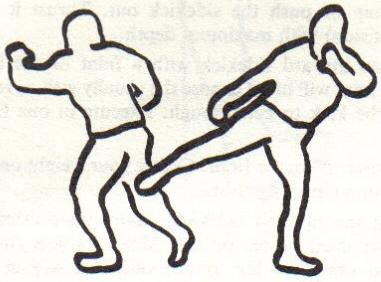
Downward Sidekick (Defensive Application)



a) ready poses



b) opponent prepares foot attack



c) downward sidekick stops foot attack in flight

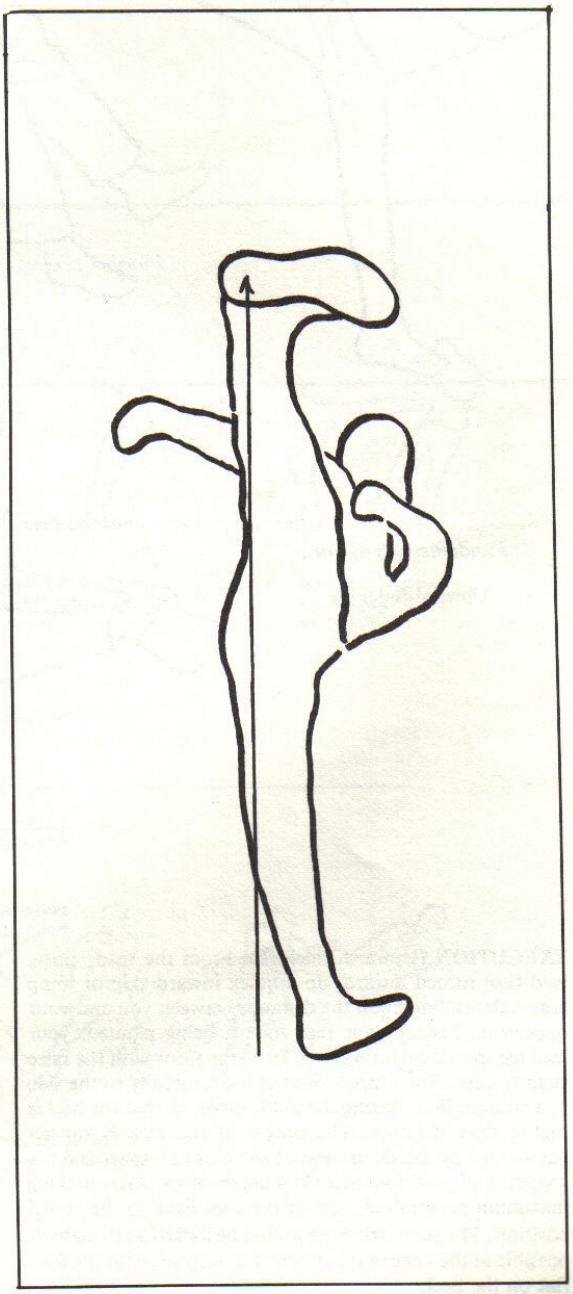
Upward Sidekick

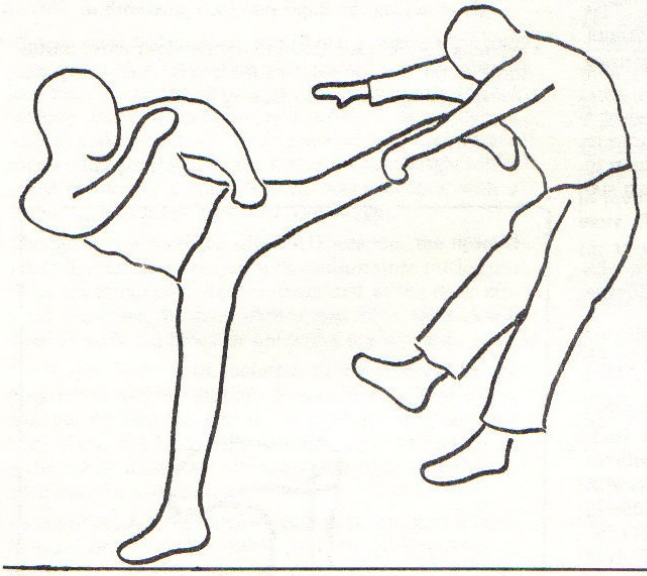
- The upward sidekick is the most powerful kicking weapon in MU TAU. One good sidekick is capable of knocking your opponent down. Its force comes from a lunging body propulsion and upward shock-impact whose follow-through is augmented by the inward momentum generated by the kicker. With the right initial speed (velocity), a small-framed man can kick with a force which is many times his own weight.
- Though it is a specified MU TAU weapon, the upward sidekick must be employed with caution since the leg can be seized if not delivered properly and at the right moment. However, due to its tremendous force, the kick will often penetrate a block or obliterate one's guard.
- The upper body must maintain its balance during the progressive kicking motion. It should be leaned to the rear but not too close to the ground as the greater the body slant, the higher the kick. Forcing the kick to go higher than necessary will decrease power and disrupt both balance and recovery.
- As the sidekick is the longest weapon, do not start it from in too close or it will be easily jammed and countered. A smothered sidekick has no real chance of gaining momentum which results in a complete loss of power.
- The further out a sidekick is initiated, the greater the power produced. However, you must be careful not to begin the delivery from too far out or your adversary might detect the kick and easily thwart your attack. Also, too much of a gap might lessen the follow-through of the attack, resulting in a mere glancing effect, or worse yet, a kick that falls short of its mark and misses completely.
- The heel is the striking point. All of the power of the body must be concentrated in a straight line to this portion of the shod foot.
- The actual speed of the upward sidekick is a combination of fast inward motion and the actual hip and leg drive.
- Try not to step with the leading foot before you actually kick with it. This may be advantageous for power but it often tends to signal your intention and miscalculate your distancing as well.
- Do not snap or push the sidekick out. Thrust it out (hyperextension) with maximum depth.
- Combine an upward sidekick with a feint of the lead hand. The feint will often expose the usually well-covered body for the kick to get through. Execute in one fluid motion.
- Take up power from the floor. Center your weight on the heel of your supporting foot.
- In making the upward sidekick, many unaccustomed body moves must be performed. Many trainees find it difficult to open the leg to the side and stretch the muscles and simultaneously maintain their balance while delivering a sidekick.
- The sidekick requires total coordination because it involves the use of the whole body.
- With the upward sidekick you can attack most of the vital points located in the midsection. It must never go any higher than the opponent's chest. In actual fighting a sidekick any higher than the chest would prove worthless since it is easier for the opponent to gauge a high kick and move away.
- The sidekick has distinct advantages over other types of kicks when it is applied effectively in combat. It can reach a considerably longer distance, so the kicker is not in immediate danger of instant counterattack. Furthermore, the execution of the kick in a closed stance leaves the kicker less open to a counter.
- The disadvantages of the sidekick are that it usually leaves the kicker in an awkward position for continuing his attack. The leg can be easily grabbed and the kicker can be pulled off balance. Consequently, delivering a powerful sidekick is not easy to do and requires much diligent practice. However, once mastered, the sidekick may be executed in a completely natural motion.
- The full thrusting force of a sidekick can be a killing attack. It provides the practitioner with a means of reaching a distant target from a well-guarded position. However, it must be delivered swiftly and not held out too long. It should also be followed by a second agile action with or after the kick.
- A full-power sidekick is often delivered with the hip of the kicking leg facing the target, and the direction of force is more toward the back than toward the side.
- The angle of delivery in a mid-area sidekick can either be parallel to the floor or a straight, upward line to the target.
- The placement of the arms depends on the moves to follow the execution of the kick. Some prefer to place the lead arm across the front of the body, and others extend it to the rear. The rear arm is usually placed in a guarding position while delivering the kick.
- To obtain maximum speed and power, you must adjust for distance in a hopping (sliding) motion; i.e. advancing your rear foot *behind* the lead leg which simultaneously kicks out. The sliding motion is a short, quick skip forward; it is not a step or jump!! While making this move, your body twists, therby exposing your kidney slightly. You must guard the kidney by placing your lead arm backward or by using a fake move to offset a counterattack.
- When your opponent is guarding his midsection tightly, it is difficult to score with a simple sidekick (as a direct attack). To loosen the tight guard and create openings for a successful sidekick, some faking moves often must precede the kick (indirect attack).
- The motion of cocking a sidekicking leg or lifting it forward is generally considered a fake sidekick. Since this fake is simply a camouflage for distance adjustment, its real value is in forcing the opponent to block down, thereby exposing his face and head. Additionally, while advancing, your lifted knee often covers your mid and low target areas against possible instant counters.
- The upward sidekick is both an offensive and defensive technique. Offensively, it is a devastating blow. Defen-

sively, it is effective as a "stopping" weapon—a kick intercepting the opponent's preparation of attack. This technique not only stops the opponent's assault midstream but also doubles the force of impact by using the opponent's momentum against him.

- The "stop" sidekick to the body works easily against a lead jab, a rear-hand blow, or rear leg round kick (due to its straight-line delivery, the sidekick has less distance to travel). Depending on the range, it may be thrown stationary (narrow stance) or on the retreat.
- Some features of the defensive sidekick are:
  a) Employed from a high, narrow-spaced stance with most, if not all, of the weight on the rear foot, allowing lead leg to be instantly ready to kick.
  b) This move is handy in a surprise attack launched by the adversary. As he starts his lunge in, you can easily catch him at his exposed spots.
  c) The intercepting use of the sidekick is most effective as an instant counter/response to the opponent's lead. Since he must move to you in order to reach you with his fist (or foot), he creates a large opening for your kick as he steps forward with a punch or pivots in with a kick. In a sense, your opponent's own initial attack defeats him.
  d) The stop sidekick has no hop/slide footwork involved as the opponent is the one who must adjust for distance to attack you. You, on the other hand, must remain in motion, bobbing and weaving the upper body for distractive purposes.
- An advanced variation of the basic hop-in (lunging) sidekick is the "running" sidekick. This move requires out-of-range positioning and two or more hopping steps rather than the usual single inward slide from long range. Combined with the advancement is an equal number of forehand feints (usually back-fists or hand flicks) to the face. The purpose of the multiple hand feints is to distract the attention of the opponent away from tightly guarding his midsection.
- Due to the extensive gap, the running sidekick, performed at full inward speed without any deliberation, packs superior power and hitting impact. Such a long distance enables the kick to attain maximum body momentum as the body propels forth. The hopping steps must flow smoothly in one continuous fluid motion. Any hesitation between the hops may disrupt the correct judgment of distance which has to be covered in order to land the kick effectively.
- NOTE: The mid-area sidekick has been found to work effectively against a left stancer or right stancer. However, it usually requires a distracting or confusing measure prior to or during its execution.

  Examples—
  (a) lead hand feint to facial area
  (b) sudden inside/outside shift
  (c) alternating the attack from the low zone to the midsection
  (d) blitzing from outside of opponent's forward leg (right or left, depending on stances)
  (e) angular changeability
  (f) attacking the blind side (compare with d)
- Training Aid: Use air shield to *test* the destructive hitting force of the lunging sidekick (to body). Also heavy bag (free-swinging or held in place by partner).

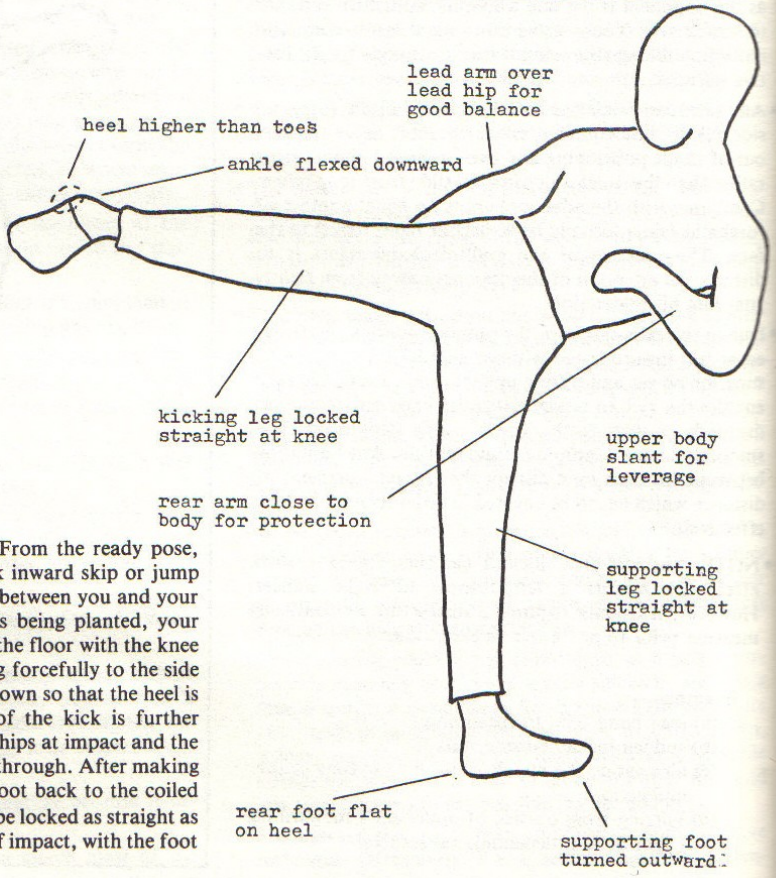




UPWARD SIDEKICK

Fundamentals of Form

Upward Sidekick

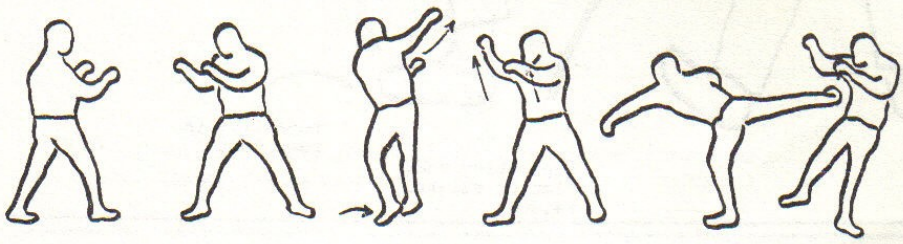


EXECUTION (Upward Sidekick): From the ready pose, lead foot turned inward, do a quick inward skip or jump lunge, depending upon the distance between you and your opponent. Just as your rear foot is being planted, your lead leg should be brought up from the floor with the knee slightly bent. Then thrust out the leg forcefully to the side in a straight line, flexing the ankle down so that the heel is higher than the toes. The power of the kick is further augmented by a sudden twist of the hips at impact and the snapping of your foot after kicking through. After making maximum penetration, retract the foot back to the coiled position. The supporting leg should be locked as straight as possible at the knee at the moment of impact, with the foot flat on the heel.

execution: upward sidekick

1. 2. 3.

How To Use the Upward Sidekick

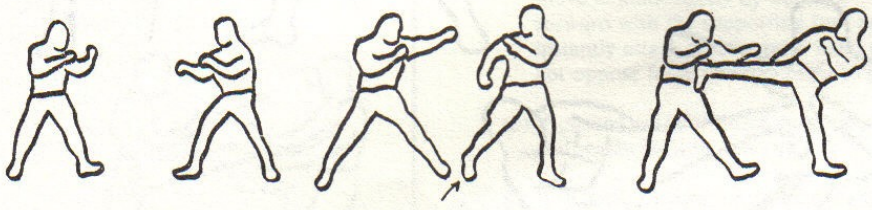


a) ready poses

b) high back-fist feint with jump lunge

c) upward sidekick to exposed mid-section

(Offensive Application)



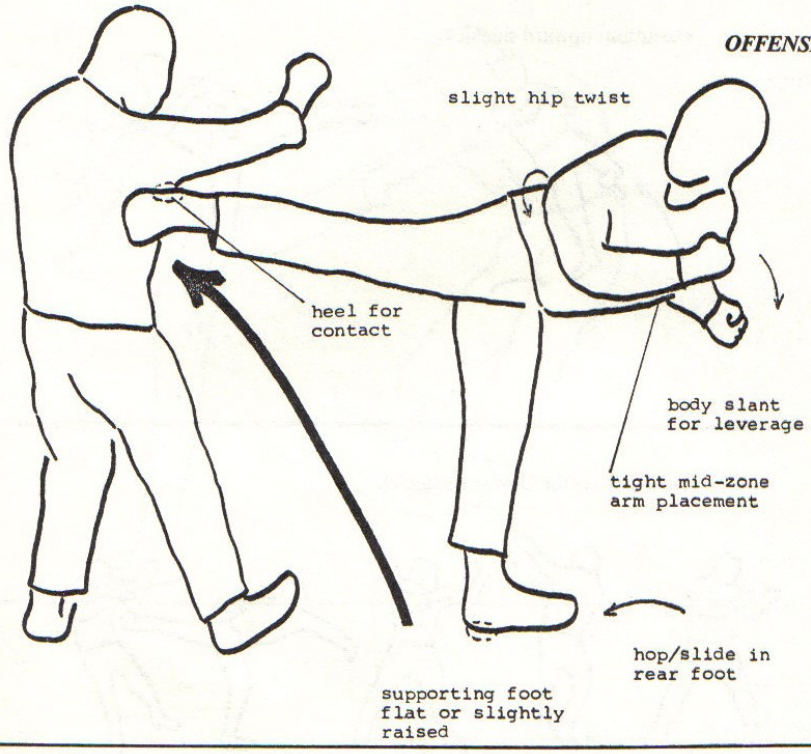
a) ready poses

b) shift weight to rear leg

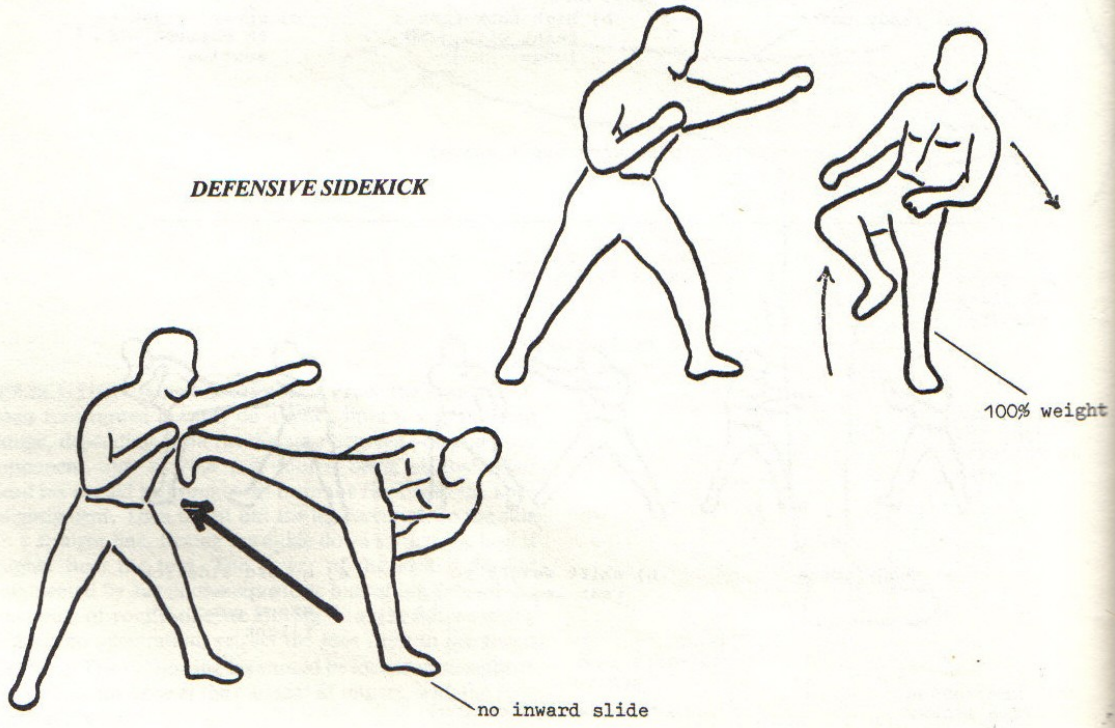
c) upward sidekick to exposed ribs stops punch in flight

(Defensive Application)

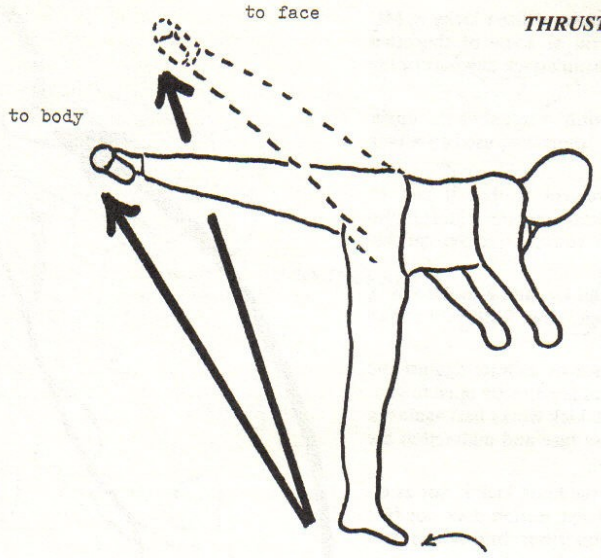
OFFENSIVE SIDEKICK (application)


slight hip twist
heel for contact
body slant for leverage
tight mid-zone arm placement
hop/slide in rear foot
supporting foot flat or slightly raised

DEFENSIVE SIDEKICK



THRUSTING BACK-SIDEKICK



*This variation of the sidekick is used to attack an opponent from behind

WHEN FOOT IS SEIZED

Explanation: A slowly retracted sidekick may result in the kicking foot being grabbed by the opponent. In this situation, the kicker must complement the force exerted by the adversary. Any resistance could disrupt balance or cause injury.

(a)

METHODS OF DEFENSE

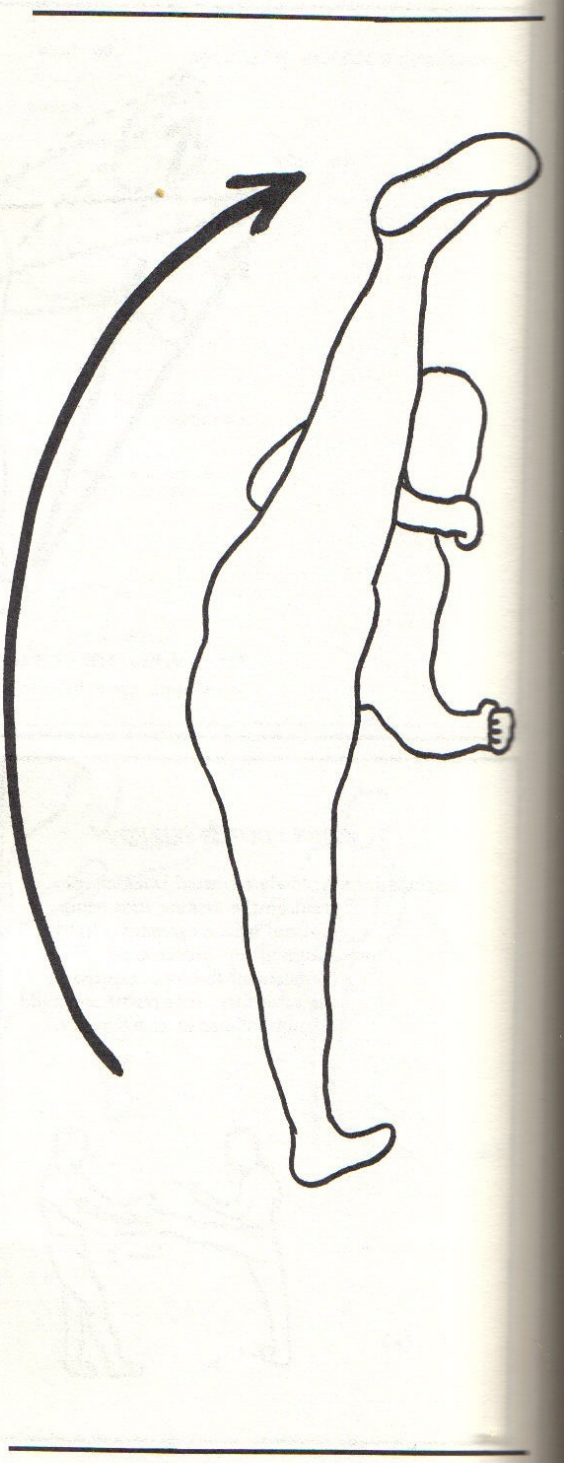
(a) If the kicking leg is caught and pulled forth move in immediately by hopping forward with the supporting foot and instantly attack with angular hand strike. Do not oppose force by attempting to pull away!

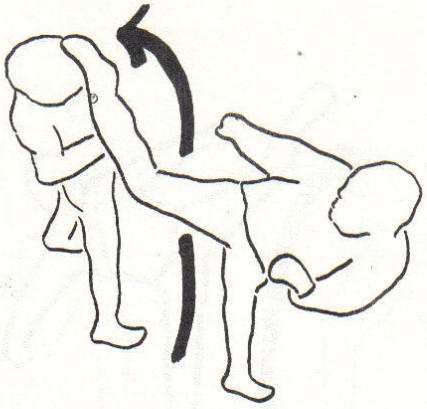
(b) If pushed out, slide back on supporting foot and regain fighting motion.

(c) If tripped, thrown, or somehow knocked to the ground, breakfall with fleshy parts of the arms and ready low kick attack with your legs always facing the opponent. Do not allow him to get inside your kicking range. When he is far enough away or subdued, get to your feet.

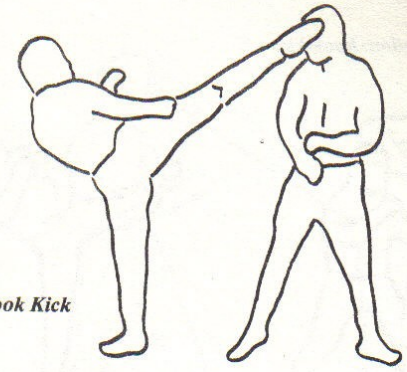
Hook Kick

- The hook kick is one of the most utilized kicks in MU TAU. Though not as powerful as some of the other kicks, it is fast, deceptive, and can attack any part of the body.
- Although the hook kick is mainly directed to the upper targets—above the belt—it is sometimes used to attack the groin or shin area.
- One advantage of this movement is that it can be delivered before the opponent can prepare for it. It is also a relatively safe technique as you can recover quickly after delivery.
- The hook kick employs the front leg, and is initiated at a closer distance than the sidekick but farther out than hand blows.
- It is most effective as an attack or counter against the same stancer whose target zones are directly open to you. For example, a lead right hook kick works best against a right stancer (southpaw) whose face and midsection are clearly vulnerable to the blow.
- Against the opposite stancer, the hook kick is not as effective since the opponent's front section does not face the angle that the kick is coming from. In this case, it is extremely difficult to score with the kick to the body or face. The primary target for the hook kick against the opposite stancer is the back (kidneys and spine).
- The hook kick can be applied as a surprise attack against an opponent who carelessly leaves an opening which can be reached from an oblique direction.
- If you overswing your hip toward your adversary while delivering the kick, it causes the entire body to rotate, disturbing your equilibrium.
- The hook kick lacks the crushing force of the sidekick but transmits a shocking impact to the recipient, enabling the kicker to maintain good balance.
- The hook kick is made with the snapping action of the knee moving in a short arc parallel to the floor while the upper body is twisted against the kicking direction for stabilization.
- Snap the kicking leg to full extension and return. The speed of initiation is matched by the speed of withdrawal. The lower leg controls the prompt motion.
- The supporting leg maneuvers off the ball of the foot. If more height is desired, lift the heel and pivot off the ball of the foot for balance.
- A disadvantage to high leg hooks is in the preparatory position prior to snapping out the lower leg. Since it exposes the groin for an instant, either hand must automatically relocate for protective purposes.
- Training Aids: heavy bag, focuser pad, arm shield, paper target, other.



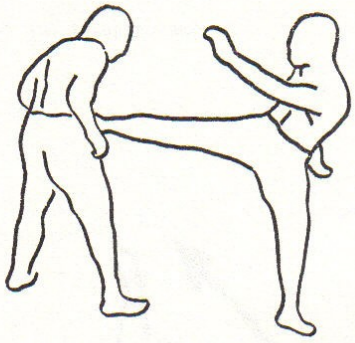


High Hook Kick



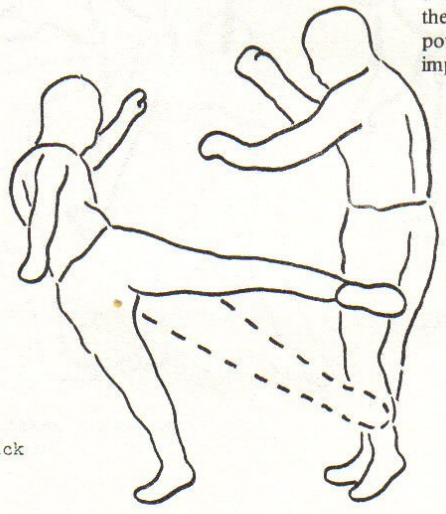
(top view)

(back view)



Mid Hook Kick (lower abdomen)

EXECUTION (Hook Kick): From the on-guard position, lead foot turned outward, do a quick inward skip, sliding the rear foot to the inside of the lead foot. As your rear foot is about to land, cock the kicking leg, bending it at the knee and lifting it sideways so that the lower part of the leg is parallel to the floor. Then, deliver the kick in a short arc, snapping it inward from the knee. The upper body should be leaning back to facilitate balance and the desired height to the kick. Immediately snap the leg back to the coiled position before dropping your kicking foot to the floor. The rear leg should be bent at the knee-joint when kicking to the lower targets, and straightened when attacking the upper zone. The supporting foot should raise off the heel, according to the height of the kick. For kicks to the face, the rear heel is up but without loss of balance. For added power, the rear foot can make a slight pivot just prior to impact.

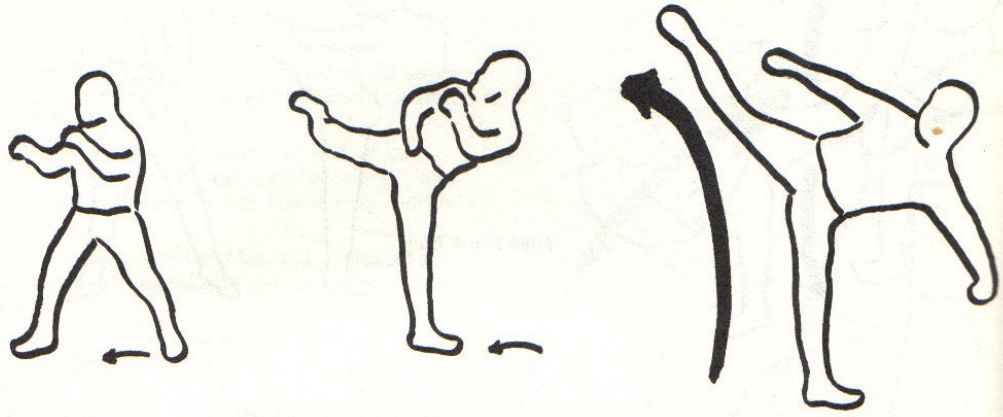


to thigh

to calf,
side of shin

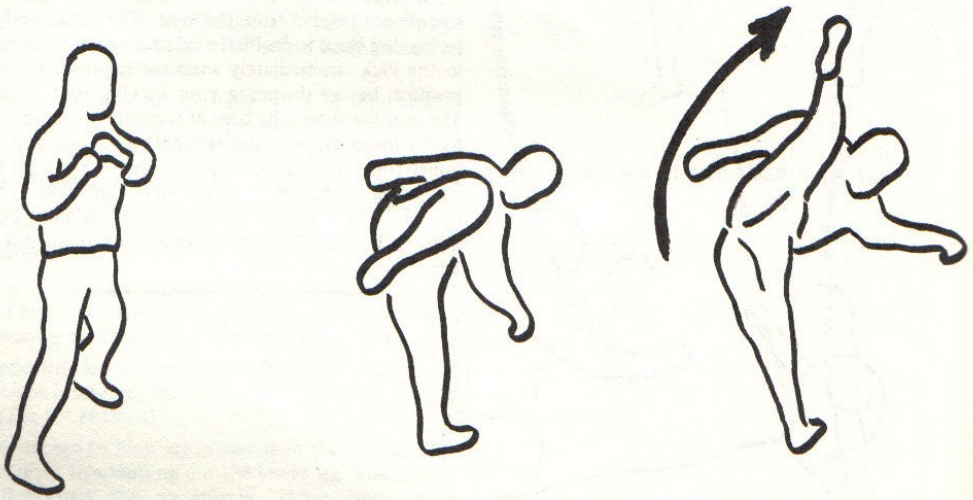
Low Hook Kick

execution: hook kick



1. 2. 3.

(side view)



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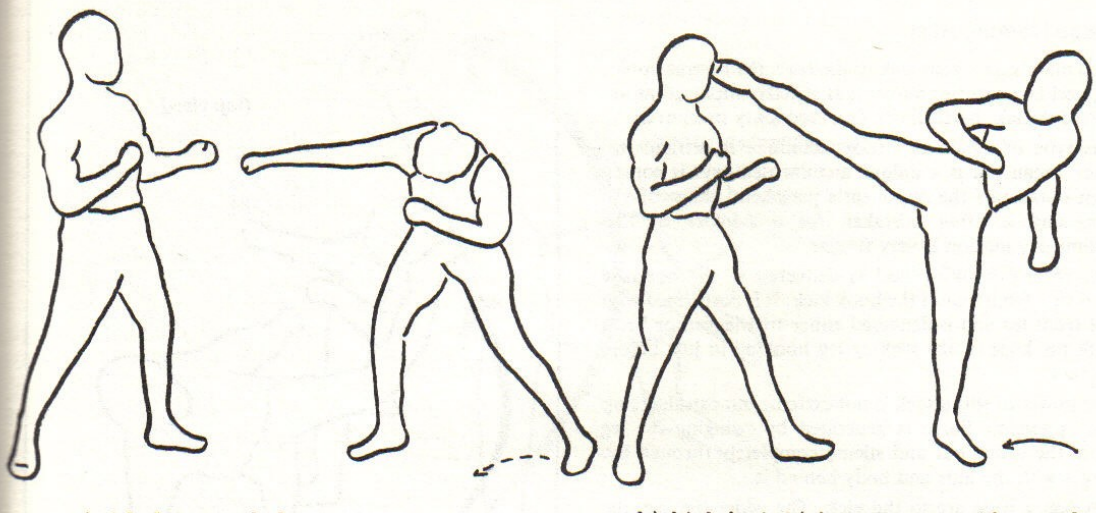
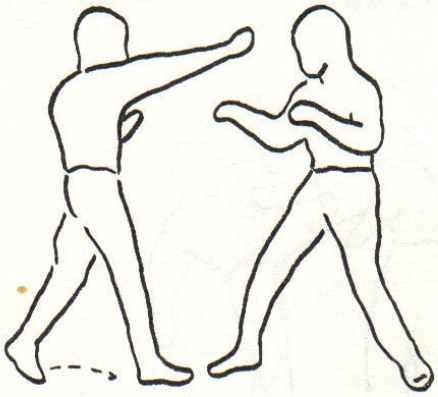
(front view)



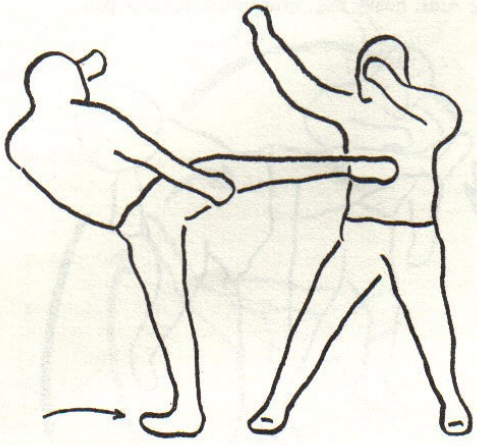
a) jab feint to body

b) high hook kick over opponent's guard

How to Use the Hook Kick



a) feint jab to face

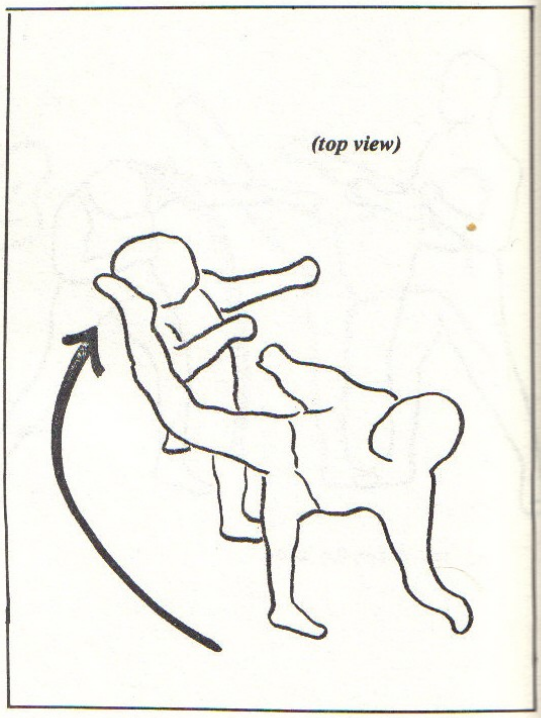


b) hook kick to solar plexus as opponent raises guard

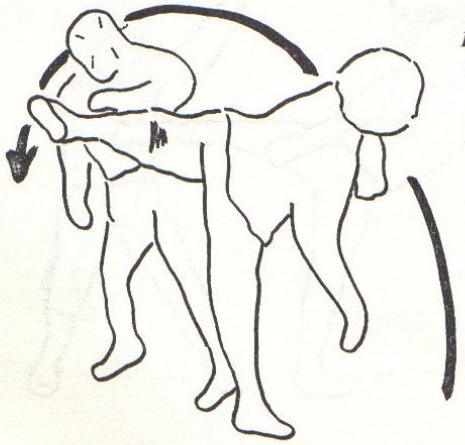
Other Kicks

Reverse Hooking Heel

- Used mainly as a high kick to the face, the reverse hooking heel is a surprise move. It is strictly employed as an offensive kick, particularly as a secondary maneuver.
- This type of "indirect" foot technique is difficult to block because it is a unique angular delivery. It comes from outside of the opponent's peripheral range of vision, and is often mistaken for a sidekick as the preliminary motion is very similar.
- The reverse hooking heel is delivered in the opposite direction from that of the hook kick. It is performed with the front leg and is delivered either stiff-legged or bent, with the knee of the kicking leg hooking in just before contact.
- The power of this attack is not extreme but can shake up the opponent. Force is generated by swinging the leg from the inside out and slicing completely through the target with the hips and body behind it.
- Develop a wide arc to the kick. The wider the arc, the harder the slicing follow-through of the back-heel of the foot.
- Is most powerful and effective when swung up to the high zone. The extra distance that the kick has to travel gives it more of a chance to develop greater momentum for maximum hitting force.
- Though the head is the main target, the kick can also be delivered low as a sweep. The back-heel of the foot must land forcefully into the calf or behind the knee to have any real effect. The circular swipe is capable of weakening the opponent's legs, destroying his mobility and, if the rival is the least bit off balance, can knock him clear off his feet.
- Training Aids: heavy bag, arm shield, focuser pad.

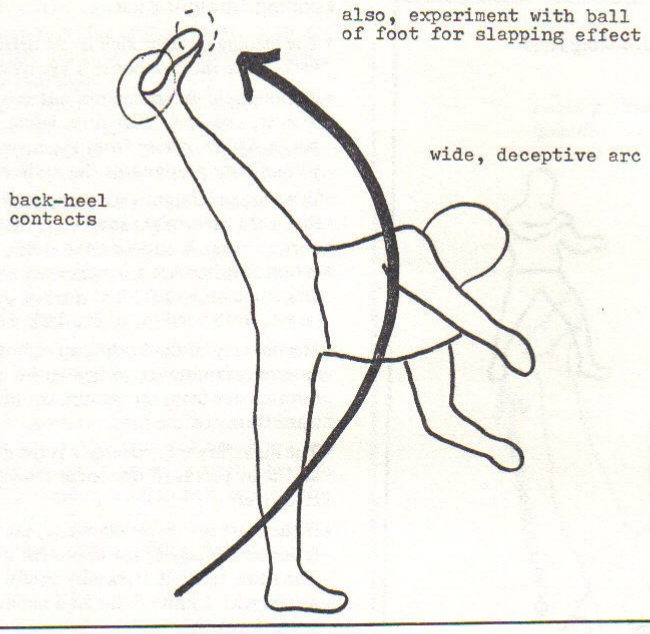


Reverse Hooking Heel



Target: face

Target: neck

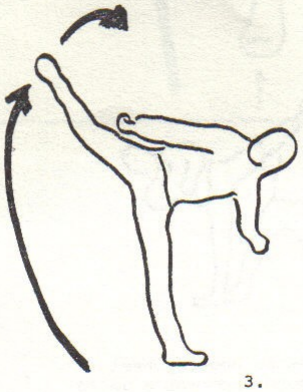


EXECUTION (Reverse Hooking Heel): From the ready pose, lead foot turned inward, do a quick inward skip, the rear foot landing behind the front foot. Simultaneously swing your lead leg in a wide arc, left to right if kicking with the right leg and from right to left if using the left leg. Quickly twist the hips in the same direction that the kick is traveling and, as the kick is about to reach its target, hook in forcefully with the knee and slice through. The rear leg should be straight with the supporting foot either flat or slightly raised. At the peak of the kick, the upper body slants back, almost parallel to the floor when kicking high, more upright when hitting low. The placement of the arms should be such that the body is well-covered and well-balanced.

1.

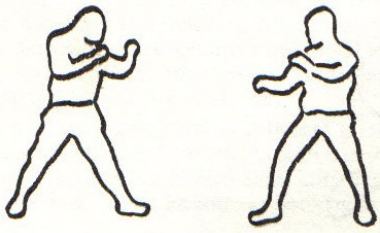
execution: reverse hooking heel

2.

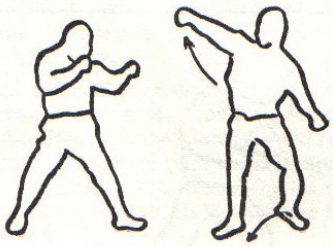


3.

How To Use the Reverse Hooking Heel



a) ready poses



b) upward sweep of hand as feint combined with inward skip

c) reverse hooking heel around opponent's guard

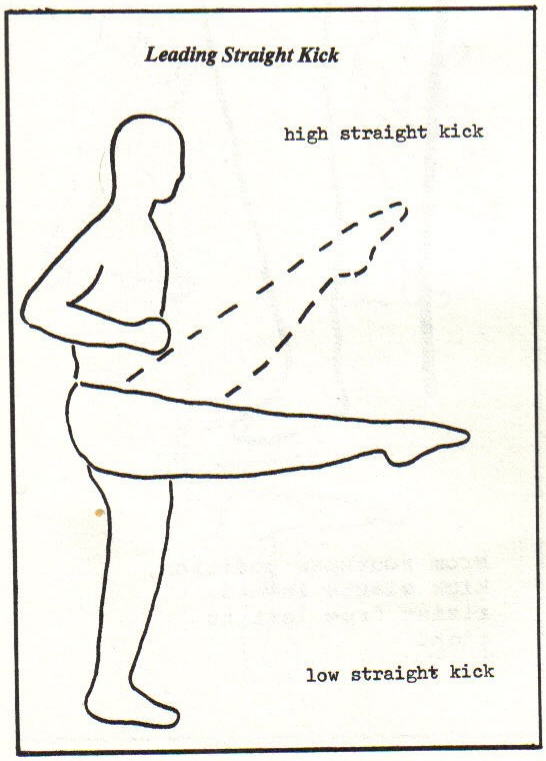
Leading Straight Kick

- The leading straight kick is not used as often as the other kicks since most opponents are well-protected against it.
- Although it is sometimes effective against the same stancer, the kick is of little value when facing the opposite stancer whose front leg covers the groin area, and whose front arm guards the midsection.
- The leading straight kick is executed with either a snap or thrust. In the straight snap kick, the knee plays a very important role. It supplies the quick initiation/retraction action that imparts a stinging impact. The straight thrust kick is much stronger and is often used to reach a distant target. Both versions of the kick employ the front leg.
- The delivery of the leading straight kick does not require an overcommitment of the entire body as most of the force comes from the motion of the lower leg and a forward thrust of the hips.
- The main target for this kick is the groin although the jaw and solar plexus (if opponent crouching) can be attacked effectively.
- If there are no visible openings, use the lead straight kick to inflict damage to the opponent's extended front hand. The same tactic is especially useful against an opponent armed with a knife in his lead hand. Aim for the wrist or lower forearm.
- Some disadvantages—
  1—execution from open stance leaves kicker vulnerable to counterattack
  2—can often be stopped with damaging effect by a defensive low sidekick
  3—difficult to use to the groin against an opposite stancer
- Position the arms such that one hand acts defensively and the other prepares for an offensive strike. If the straight kick misses its mark, you can follow with the hand technique.
- The straight toe kick is effective as a swift attack in both direct and countering moves.
- Combinations utilizing this kick are hard to block. Discover all of the different combinations of front-hand blows and fakes with lead straight kicks.
- When your opponent is close enough to you so that sliding inward is not necessary, snap the straight kick from a stationary position to intercept the opponent's actions with the least amount of movement possible. This move is delivered from a stance in which there is almost no weight on the lead foot, allowing an attack without much body maneuvering.
- Avoid these mistakes—
  1—bending the back and extending the hips to the rear
  2—not raising the knee high enough up to the chest before kicking
  3—not kicking directly to the front of the body; balance is weakened and efficient use of the maximum number of muscles impaired
  4—lowering the kicking leg to the ground without

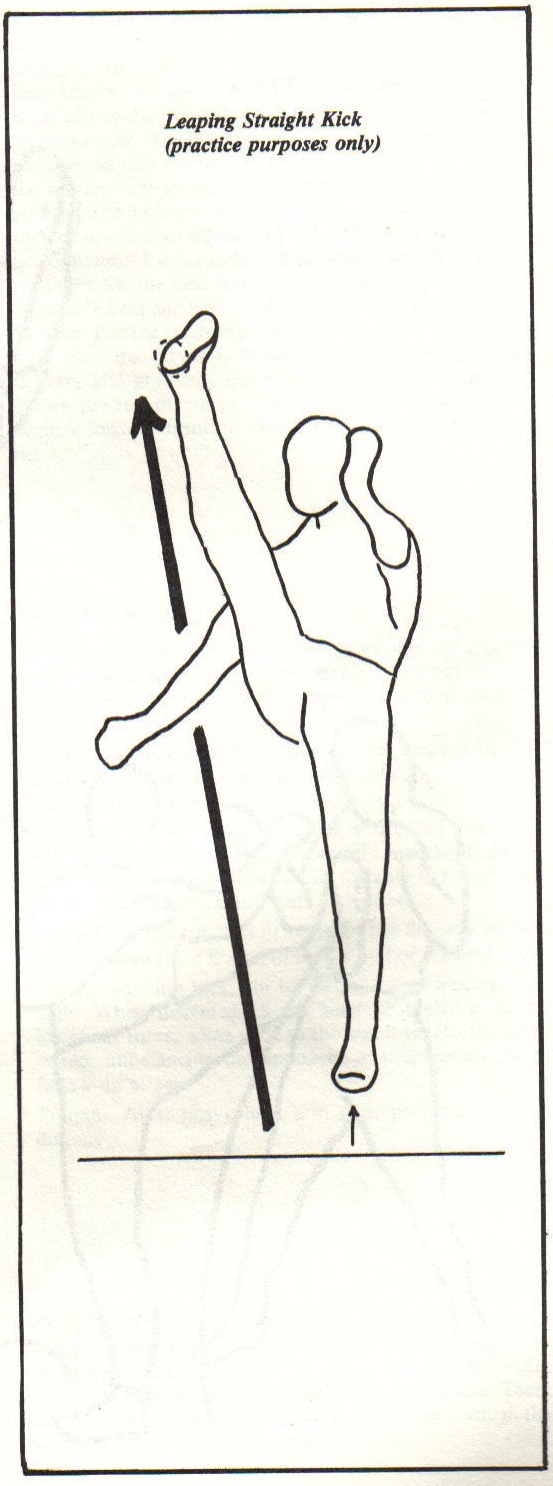
first withdrawing the knee to the chest; this creates an opportunity for opponent to grab the leg; also weakens balance and delays preparation for the next technique

5—leaning the upper body into the direction of the kick. This causes your face to jut to the front, offering an easy target for your opponent's attack. If the line of your body's center of gravity leans forward, the arc through which your kicking leg will travel decreases, and the power of the kick diminishes accordingly. In addition, balance will be lost when you attempt to return your leg after a kick if the upper half of your body inclines forth.

- A slight variation of the leading straight kick, called the inward slant kick, is effective against the opposite stancer, especially if you are standing angular to him. The slant kick is delivered upward with the power created by thrusting the hips forward prior to contact. It is a difficult movement with which to generate power because you must have perfect synchronization between the hips and kicking motion.
- Training Aids: heavy bag, other striking dummies.



Leading Straight Kick

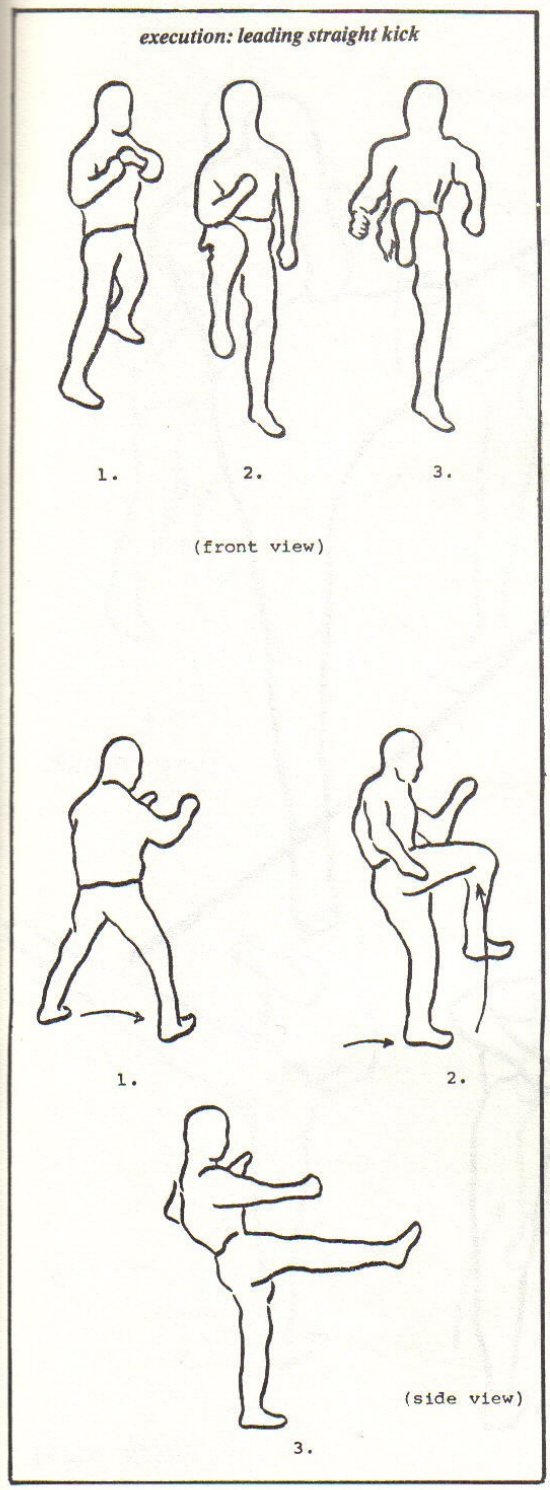


Leaping Straight Kick
(practice purposes only)

INWARD SLANT KICK

outside foot edge
for contact

From southpaw position,
kick slants inward,
rising from left to
right



EXECUTION (Leading Straight Kick): From the ready pose, lead foot turned outward, do a quick inward skip, sliding in the rear foot to the inside of the front foot. Simultaneously, raise your lead knee so that the upper leg is parallel to the floor. Snap the lower leg directly forward from the knee. The instep of the kicking foot must be flexed down so that the toe of the shod foot juts out. Return the kicking foot to the cocked position and drop it to the ground. The delivery of the kick and recovery must be performed in one continuous snapping motion. This prevents the opponent from catching the foot, and places you in readiness for the next move. The supporting knee should be slightly bent and body posture straight to maintain good balance. For the thrusting version of this kick, you should push the hips forward, tensing at the beginning of the delivery and gradually increasing the tension as the foot moves toward the target. The upper body should lean slightly forth to transmit more power behind the kicking leg.

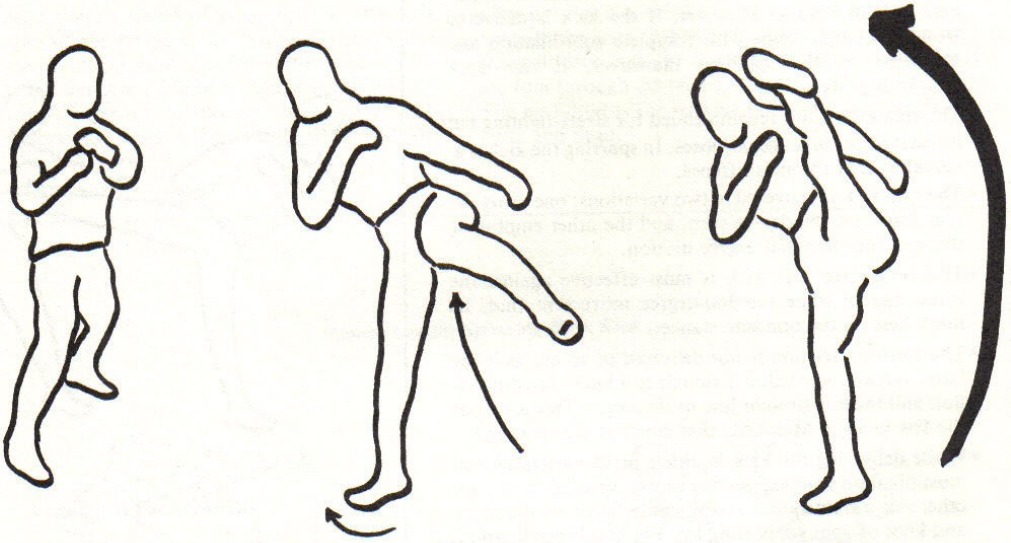
Roundhouse Kick

- The roundhouse kick is used mostly against the opposite stancer and, therefore, is not considered a primary kick. It is a finishing attack, with its power generated from the rotating motion of the body.
- Unlike the hook kick which employs the forward leg, the roundhouse uses the rear leg. This is one of the few kicking techniques that utilize the rear foot.
- The roundhouse kick is not as fast as the lead hook kick but is much stronger. Like the straight rear thrust punch the roundhouse kick has a further distance to travel to its target which allows a full shift of weight.
- There is no inward skip or lunge in the delivery of this kick. Instead there is a pivot on the ball of the lead foot.
- The roundhouse kick can be directed low, medium, or high. When delivered to the head or body, it packs knockout force; when used to the legs it is effective as a sweep, unbalancing the opponent in preparation for a follow-up attack.
- Training Aids: heavy bag, arm pad, portable striking dummy.

EXECUTION (Roundhouse Kick): From the on-guard position, lead foot turned outward, pivot on the ball of the front foot while cocking the rear leg on your side so that the lower part of the leg is parallel to the ground. Then, deliver the kick in a circular motion and follow through the target by swinging the hips into the blow.

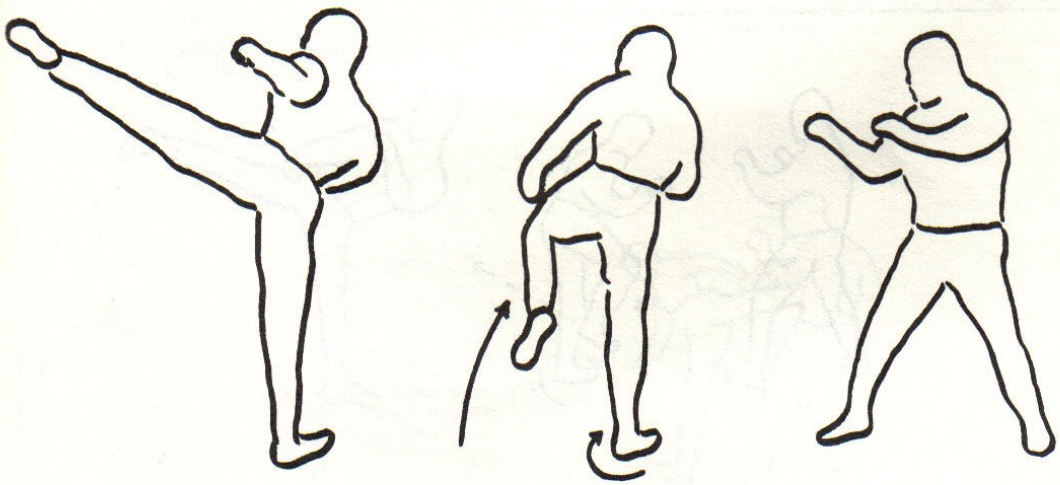
Roundhouse Kick

execution: roundhouse kick



1. 2. 3.

(front view)



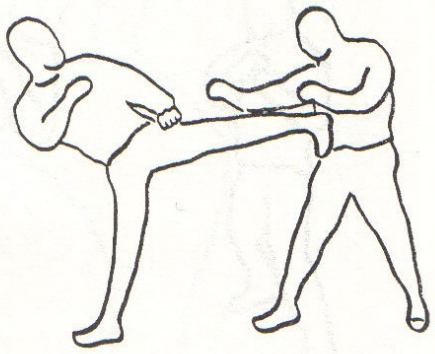
3. 2. 1.

(side view)

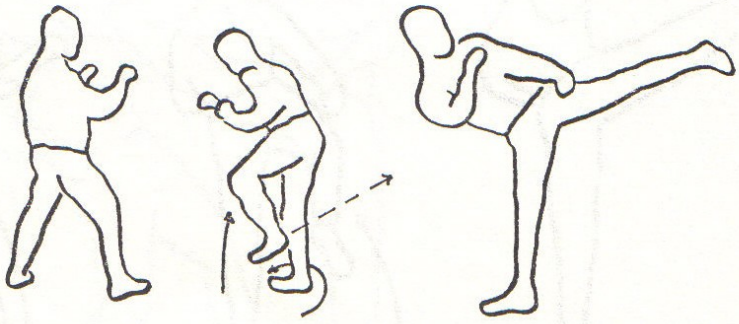
Spin Kick

- The spin kick is one of the most recent additions to the MU TAU leg weaponry. It is a strong kick, used mainly as a surprise attack or countering move. It is more difficult to execute than the other kicks since it involves a body rotation which also exposes your back to the opponent for an instant. However, if the kick is delivered from an oblique angle with complete coordination and quickness in the spinning maneuver, it can pack knockout power.
- The spin kick is not recommended for street-fighting but is reserved for practice purposes. In sparring the kick is a valuable asset to one's offense.
- The spin kick is delivered in two variations: one using the rear foot in a 180-degree turn, and the other employing the lead foot in a 360-degree motion.
- The 180-degree spin kick is most effective against the same stancer while the 360-degree movement finds its mark best on the opposite stancer.
- The former variation is not delivered in an arc as is the latter version. Instead, it is similar to a back-thrusting action and takes a straight line to its target. This is one of the few kicks in MU TAU that employs the rear leg.
- While delivering the kick in either of its variations you must pivot on your supporting foot as your body rotates, otherwise a tremendous strain would occur on the ankle and knee of your supporting leg. For good coordination, your body balance must be well retained.
- In rotating your body as you kick, special care must be taken to protect your back from an instant counter-attack. Covering your back slightly with your arm by moving it back first and then kicking, would provide a guard a well as an aid in rotating the body smoothly.
- Training Aids: heavy bag, arm pad, portable striking dummy.

execution: spinning back kick (180 degrees)



target: solar plexus

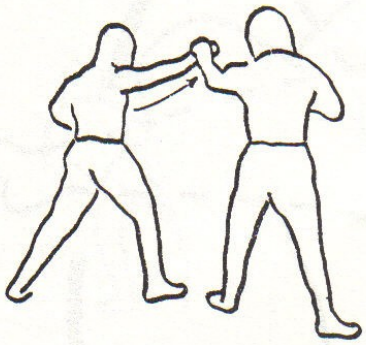


1. 2. 3.

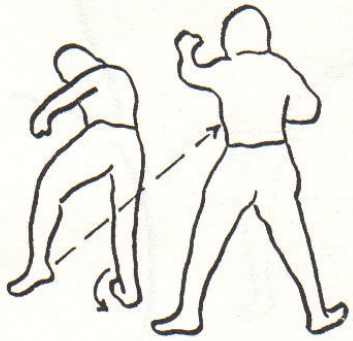
EXECUTION (180-degree Spin Kick): From the ready pose, lead foot turned inward, rotate your body 180 degrees by pivoting on the ball of your slightly-bent front foot. Keep your lead leg bent at the knee. The rear leg (kicking leg) should be cocked with the heel pointing toward the target. Your upper body should lean forward, with your head slightly ahead of your trunk so that you have a glimpse of the target before kicking. Upon completing the pivot, thrust your rear leg straight back. Use your hips at the moment of impact. The arms should be kept close to the body for balance and to guard against possible counters. The heel is the striking point and the targets are the body and head.

EXECUTION (360-degree Spin Kick): From the ready pose, lead foot turned outward, step in with the rear foot while sweeping the rear hand upward in a feinting motion. In one fluid, continuous movement, pivot on the ball of the newly-planted front foot and rotate the body in a complete circular motion. The kicking leg should make a wide arc with the knee slightly bent as you pivot. Using the centrifugal force supplied by the body rotation slice the kicking foot through the target, keeping the leg stiff at impact. The back-heel is the striking point and the targets are the body and head.

How to Use the Spinning Back Kick



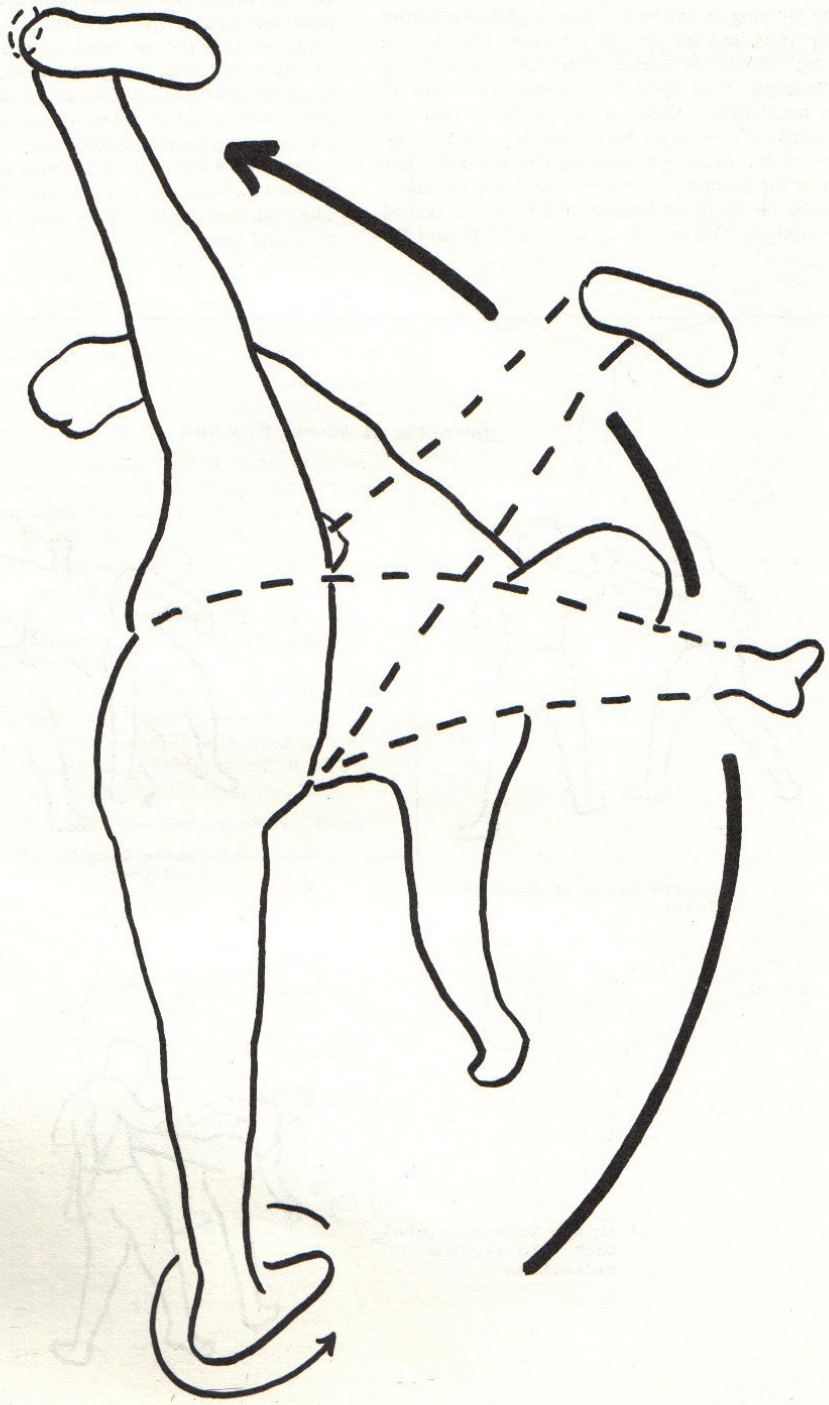
a) upward sweep of hand as feint



b) rotate body by pivoting on lead foot

c) thrust kick straight back into exposed midsection

Spinning Wheel Kick (360 degrees)



execution: spinning wheel kick to head

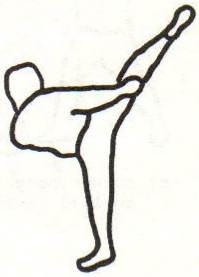
1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

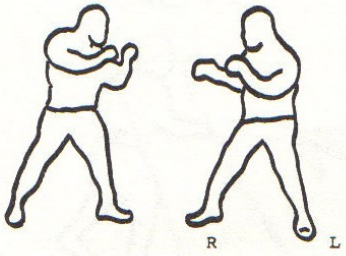


6.

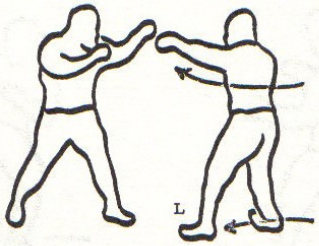
7.

8.

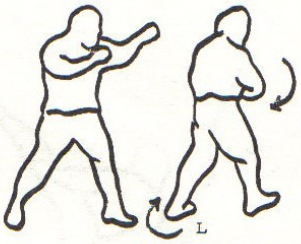
How To Use the 360-degree Spin Kick



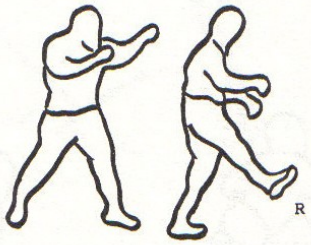
a) ready poses



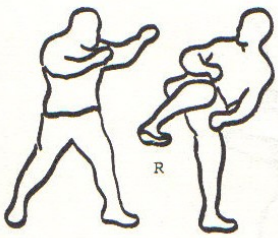
b) step in with rear (left) foot/upward sweep of rear (L) hand as distraction



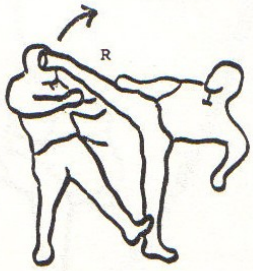
c) rotate body for power by pivoting on lead (left) foot



d) swing right foot up and outward



e) draw knee of kicking leg to hip, heel pointing toward target

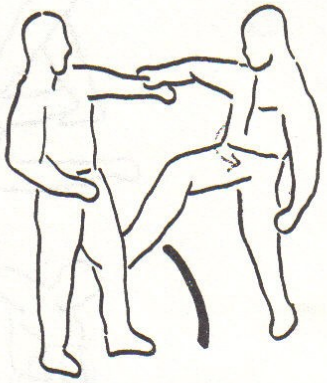


f) slice heel through target by using centrifugal force supplied by spinning body rotation

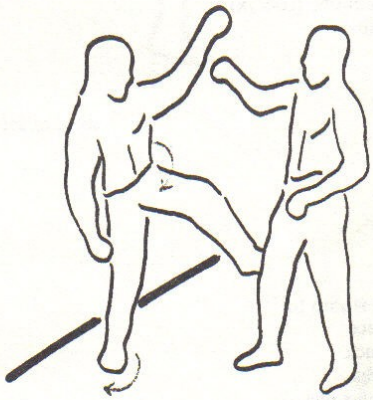
Sweeps

- Sweeps are a unique feature of MU TAU. They are both offensive and defensive in nature. Offensively, a sweep can effectively upset an opponent's balance as well as floor him. Several consecutive sweeps that lack the knockdown power individually but score consistently to the same spot can seriously injure the enemy's legs, thereby neutralizing his mobility. Defensively, the sweep is used to counter the opponent's high kick. It slices at the vulnerable supporting leg, breaking one's balance, dropping him hard on his back. This maneuver requires great speed, exact timing, and shrewd judgment since there are three separate moves involved: ducking underneath the oncoming kick; dropping to the ground; and executing the sweep.
- Either leg is used to sweep depending on the opponent's stance. An inward or outward arc of the lead or rear leg employing the instep, lower shin, or back-heel to the "weak points" of the foe's lower extremities is included in the attack.
- The sweep gains power from a sharp body twist or pivot which supplies the slicing momentum and velocity to the movement. A wide swing of the leg is also vital.

SWEEPS

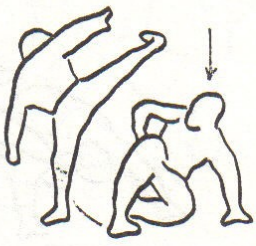


SHORT SWEEP (lead leg swipes)

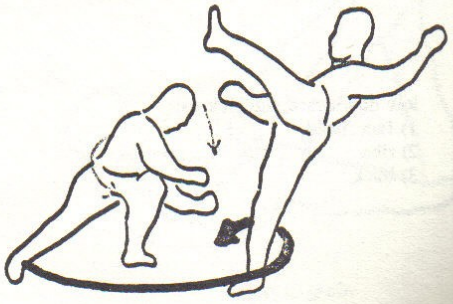


LONG SWEEP (rear leg swipes)

- DROP SWEEPS -



lead leg (reverse)



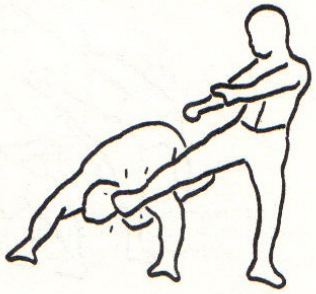
rear leg (pivot/hook)

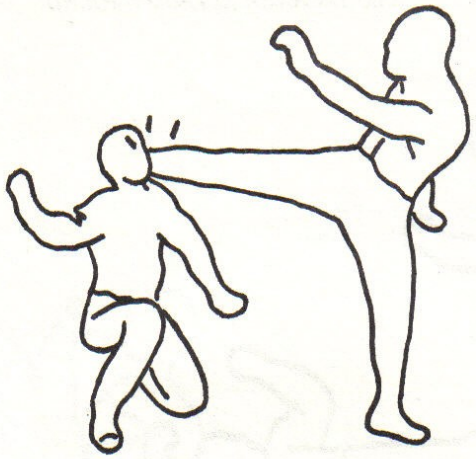
KICKING A DOWNED OPPONENT

straight toe kick to:
1) base of head/neck
2) temple
3) tailbone (coccyx)
4) ribs

heel stomp to:
1) face
2) back
3) ribs
4) solar plexus
5) knee/shin
6) ankle

low downward sidekick to:
1) face/head
2) ribs
3) back



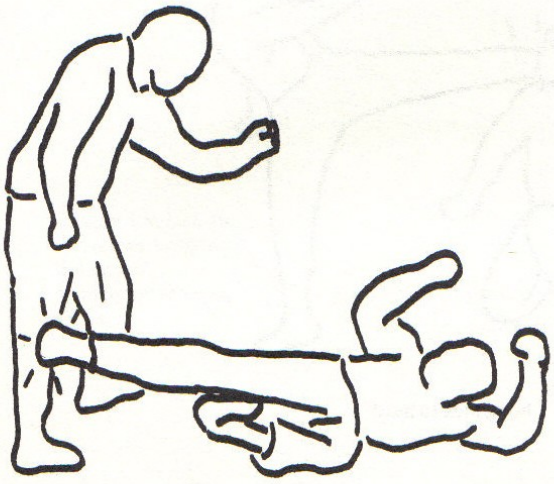


hook kick to head

direct kick to face

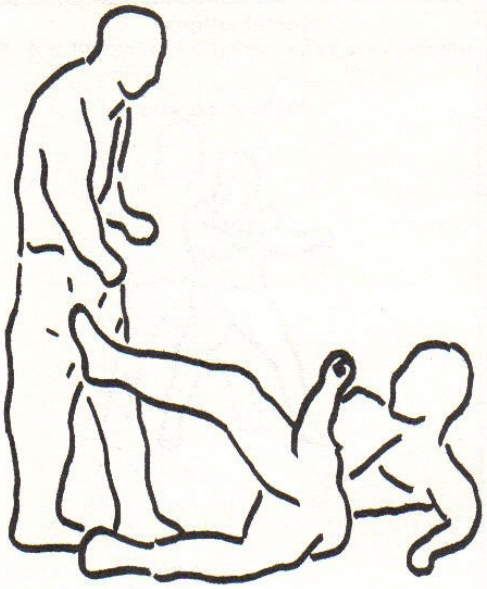
heel to groin

LEG TECHNIQUES FROM GROUND



1) sidekick to knee/shin

2) upward sidekick to groin



3) upward straight kick
(toe/heel) to groin

4) Round Kick to body

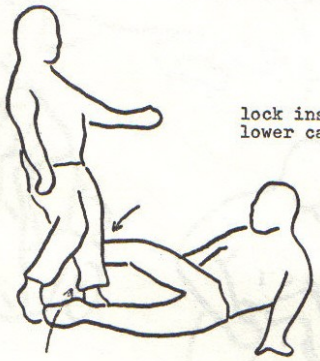
5) Swing Kick to face

Kicking Combinations

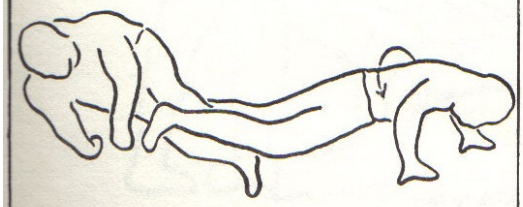
There are few kicking combinations used in MU TAU. Those that are practiced consist of two or more kicks delivered in fluid succession. As in combination punching, combinations with the feet place a heavier burden on the opponent's defense. The first kick is frequently employed to close the gap for the stronger follow-up kick. The most utilized foot combinations are:

1) double hook kick (low/high)
2) low straight kick/high hook kick
3) low straight kick/downward sidekick
4) high hook kick/medium spin back kick

Leg Scissors/Rolling Leg Vise



1. Application of Leg Vise



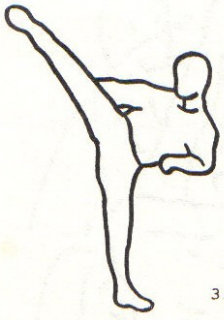
2. Roll to exert pressure on legs, forcing takedown and submission hold

Combinations

double hook kick

1.

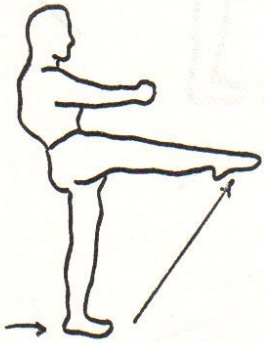
2.



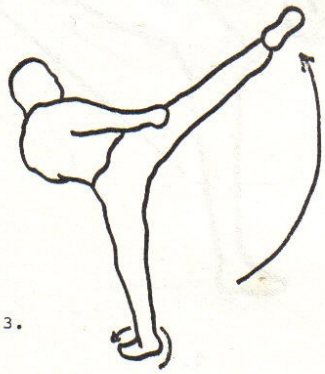
3.

execution: low straight kick/high hook kick combination

1.



2.



3.

execution: low straight kick/downward sidekick combination

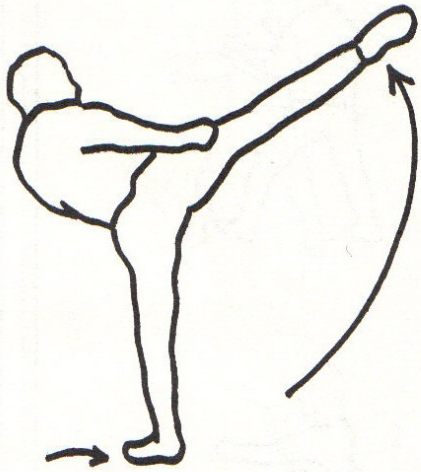
1.

2.

3.

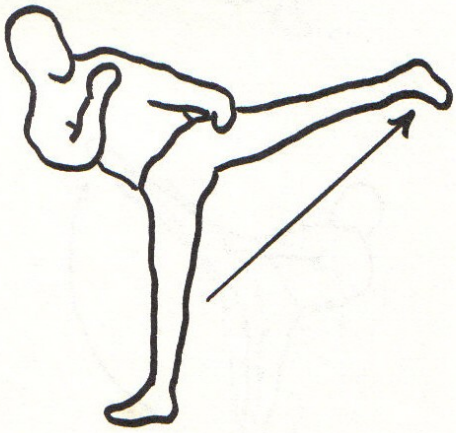
execution: high hook kick/medium spin back kick combination

1.



2.

3.



4.

THE ELBOW

The use of the elbow is most effective for close-range combat or in situations where the free movement of the body is lost. It is a deadly in-fighting weapon but tends to lose its effectiveness as the distance from the opponent increases. The elbow smash is performed by driving the elbow forward, sideward, backward, or downward.

Forward Elbow Smash

With the arm held horizontal, the elbow is propelled forward in a circular motion with a twist of the shoulder and hips. Main targets are the face, neck, jaw, ribs, and kidneys.

Side Elbow Smash

This attack is aimed sidewards and is executed horizontally with a sharp body rotation. Any vital point of the head or body is extremely sensitive to this attack.

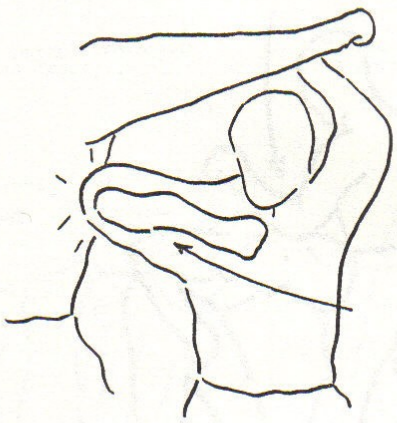
Back Elbow Smash

This technique is aimed to the rear and is driven back forcefully in a straight line. The face and solar plexus are the primary targets.

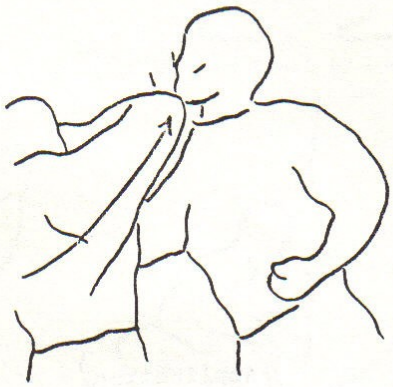
Downward Elbow Smash

This attack is employed primarily as a finishing stroke once the opponent is bent over. Targets are the back of the head, the base of the neck, and the spine.

Elbow Blows

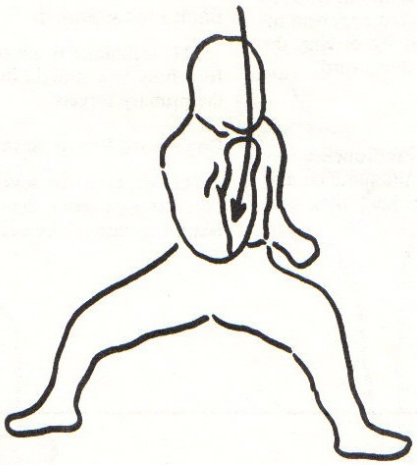


Side Elbow
Smash to ribs



Forward Elbow Smash
(upward to jaw)

Downward Elbow Smash



(Execution)

(Application)

THE KNEE

A most powerful and devastating offensive weapon, the knee, like the elbow, is used mainly for infighting. Knee blows are aimed at any part of the body, though the prime targets are the solar plexus, kidneys, ribs, face, and head. The knee smash is utilized in three ways: upward, sidewards, or downward.

Upward Knee Smash

Usually, this technique is employed after having grabbed the opponent's neck or head, which is jerked downward as the knee drives up. The groin and mid-section are also target areas.

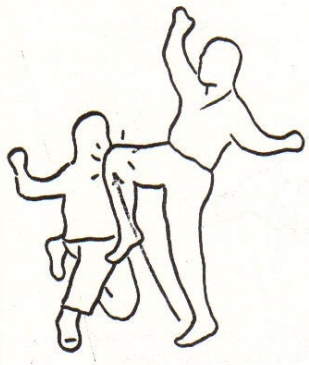
Side Knee Smash

During a clinch, this technique attacks the ribs or kidneys. It is delivered in a circular motion to the target.

Knee Drop

Used with or without a jump, this maneuver is used as a finishing stroke to a fallen opponent. It is directed to the head, face, body, groin, or spine.

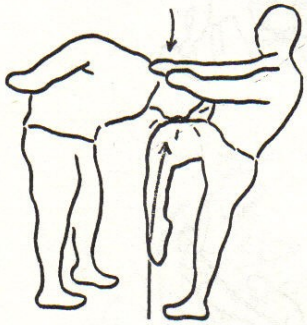
Knee Blows



Upward Knee Smash to face

Upward Knee Smash to groin

Side Knee Smash to body



Upward Knee Smash to face (pulling head down)

Upward Knee Smash to spine (pulling head back)

Knee Drop to spine

GRAPPLING

The goal of the ancient Greek pankratiast was to drop the opponent to his back or to some other helpless position whereby other grappling maneuvers, usually in the form of joint locks or strangulations, could be applied for the sole purpose of submission.

Grappling moves are applied at close quarters, in situations where a blow of the fist, foot, elbow, or knee is inappropriate. When the striking tools are rendered useless by the tight proximity of the fighters, grappling is the alternative to gain the upper hand.

Understanding the principles of leverage and being able to apply them in a fast exchange are essential for success in the grappling phase of the art. Most techniques depend on levering an opponent into an awkward position, using his strength against him, rather than calling on mere brute force. Strength is indeed an asset in grappling but it is not the prime source of success in compelling an adversary to surrender.

Grappling is composed of takedowns, joint locks, and strangulations. Because grappling is a science in itself, there are hundreds of combined moves and holds involving these three basic techniques. Taking a man down means working your way from a neutral infighting position to a position in which you have the advantage, controlling your opponent by forcing him to the ground. Once the foe is downed, you can usually follow up with a disabling hit or submission hold. Essentially, there are three ways to apply a takedown:

a) tackling the opponent's legs
b) tripping the opponent
c) throwing the opponent

These basic moves may overlap one another because a takedown is seldom a singular, isolated maneuver; rather it is a series of maneuvers and grips predicated on the reaction of your rival.

There are four important elements in making an effective takedown:

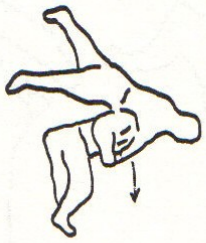
1) timing in making your move so that your contact with the opponent's leg or legs is made while he is reacting and off-balance
2) pressuring your opponent by pushing off with your back foot and drawing your lead shoulder and head into his midsection to keep his weight inclined in your favor
3) supporting yourself with a solid base
4) following up instantly and decisively once you have the opponent's leg—never let him recover!!

Locks applied to an opponent's limbs has always been characteristic of pankration. It is one of the quickest means of forcing an opponent to quit. Opportunities for applying them are more frequent when one or both of the combatants are on the ground, where a struggle is often decided.

The Eleans especially commended strangling as a means

SOME THROWING/TAKEDOWNS

Tripping

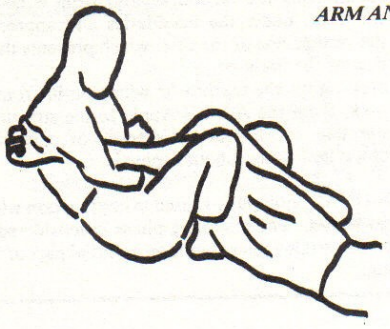


Rear Shoulder Throw

Diving Leg Tackle

Leg Swipe

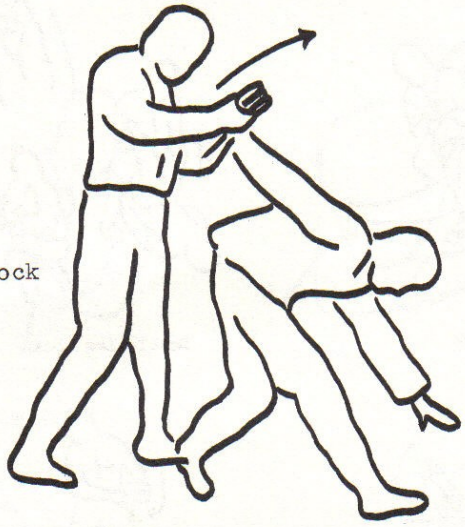
ARM AND WRIST LOCKS



Arm Bar

Elbow Lock

Reverse Wrist Lock



Arm Pin (hold-down)

Elbow Breaker

of defeating an adversary. A trained pankratiast realized at once when his opponent had secured a grip which might cause serious injury, and would immediately acknowledge defeat before any harm could come to him.

A stranglehold can be obtained by virtually any grip upon the neck, but the favorite method employed by pankratiasts was the so-called "ladder-trick." The technique involved the attacker jumping on his opponent's back, twining his legs around his body, and his arms about his neck. This was performed while both men were still on their feet, or when they were waging battle on the ground.

The object of strangulations is to cause the victim to lose consciousness by:

1) compressing the carotid arteries from either side of the neck, under the maxillaries and appreciably in the verticle line of the ears, which prevents the irrigation of the brain or,
2) pressing on the trachea or windpipe in front of the neck, from the Adam's Apple to the summit of the sternum, which prevents renewal of oxygen of the blood and brings about asphyxia.

In MU TAU, grappling is used in conjunction with kicking and hitting. The grappling phase is considered secondary to the striking phase but is an essential part of "total" fighting.

LEG LOCKS

Side Leg Lock

lift up

seated

Double Leg Locks

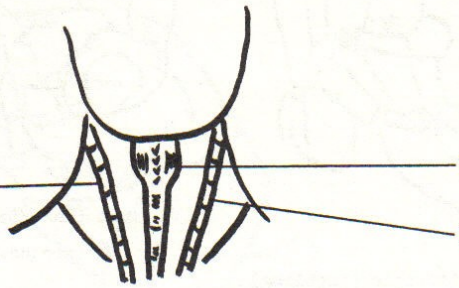
Inward Leg Wind

Toe Hold (knee as vise)

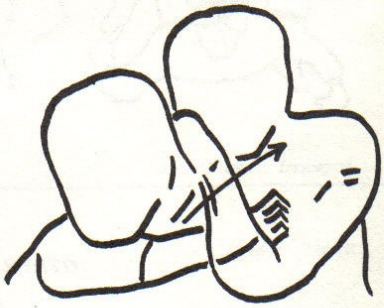
Single Leg Lock (on ground)

follow with heel to groin

STRANGULATIONS



Front Face Lock

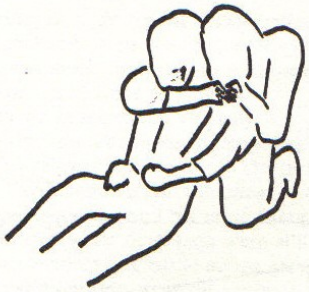


Rear Choke

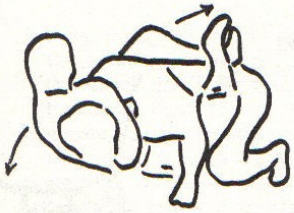
Side Neck Lock

Side Strangle

Front Strangle



Rear Strangle (kneeling)



Front Choke/Leg Scissors
(groundwork)

OTHER HEAD MANIPULATIONS

Forward Head Crank

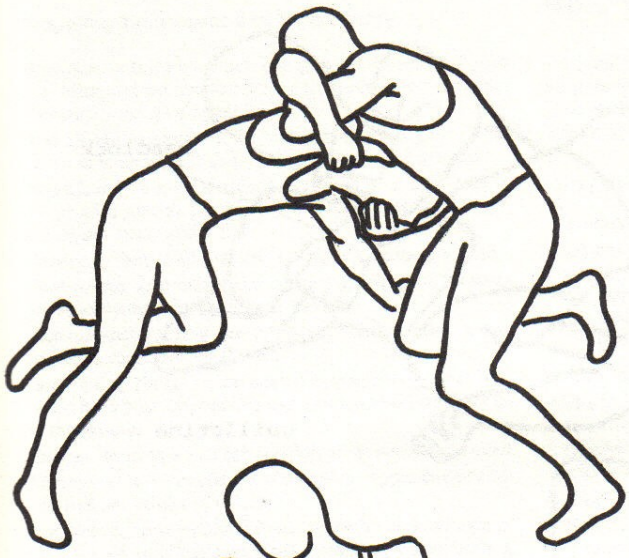
Head Crank (variation)

Neck Twister

OTHER LOCKS AND HOLDS

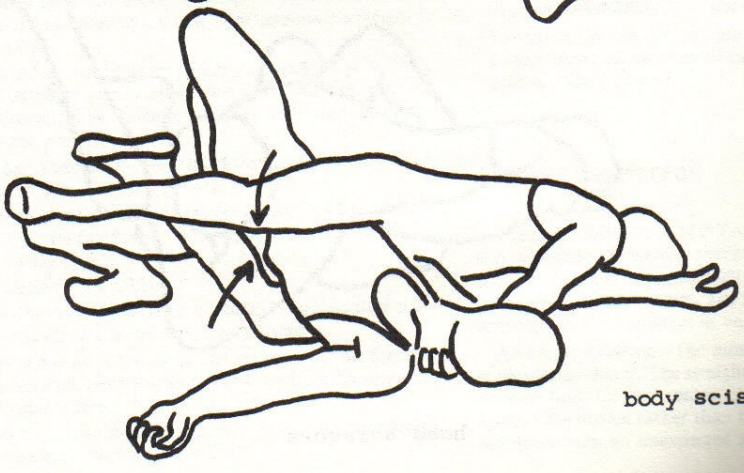
hammerlock

overhead full nelson

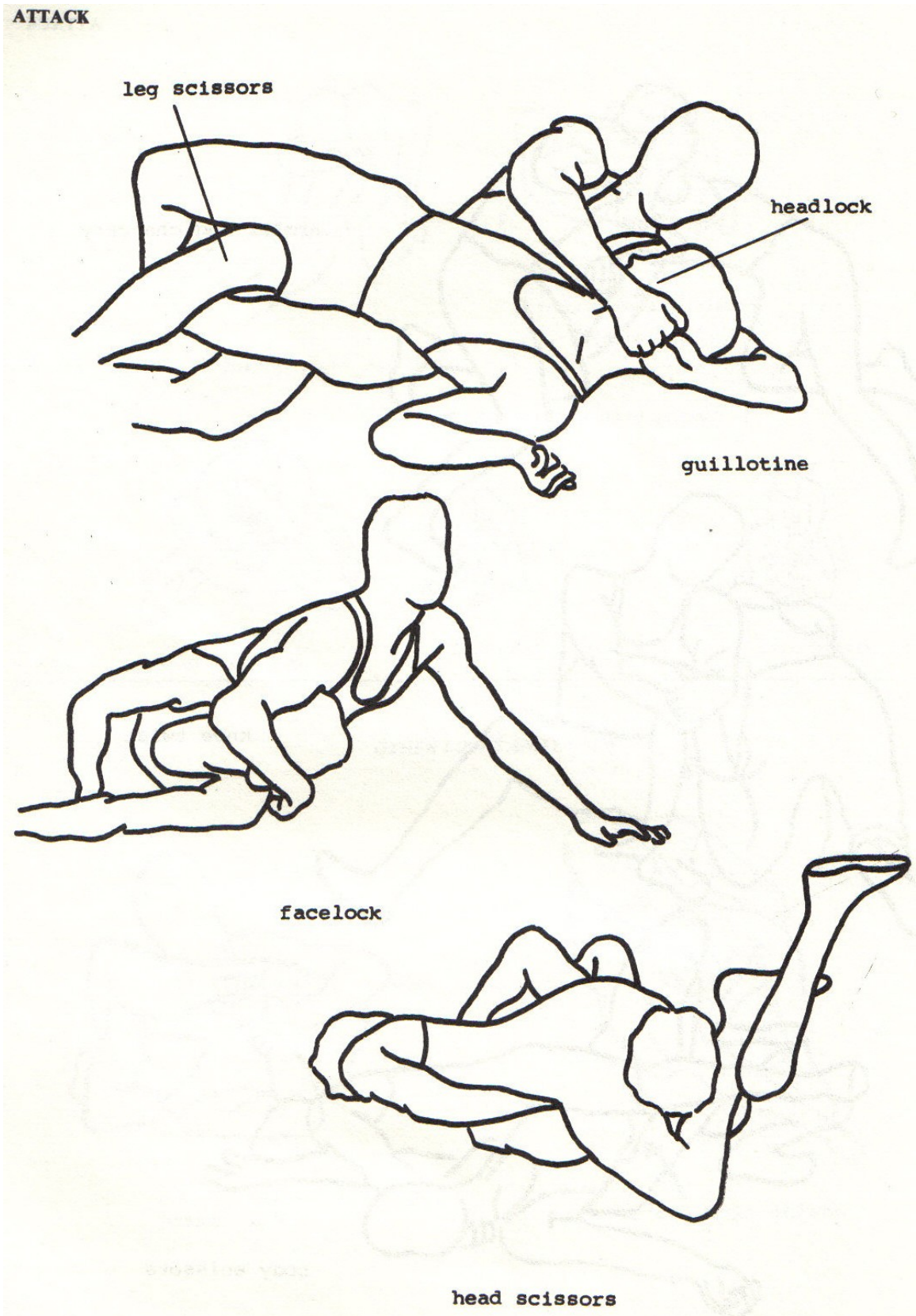


armbar and chancery

knee twist



body scissors


leg scissors
headlock
guillotine
facelock
head scissors

Grappling Techniques and Terminology

Arm Bar—a hold by which you grip the forearm of your opponent and pry against the back of his elbow or upper arm with your own upper arm

Arm Drag—a maneuver by which you grasp your opponent's arm and use it to pull him down to the ground

Breakdown—a move designed to flatten your opponent to the ground and knock his supporting points (hands and knees) out from under him

Chancery—any hold that entraps your opponent's head

Choke—any grip about the neck or throat which causes unconsciousness due to loss of oxygen

Control—neutralizing the opponent so that your are in complete command of the action

Double Leg Tackle—a takedown maneuver by which you tackle both your opponent's legs and send him crashing into the ground

Escape—gaining a neutral position after being controlled

Extrapolation—a maneuver whereby the opponent's hands and legs are rendered useless

Full Nelson—a submission hold in which you lever against the back of your foe's neck after reaching under both of his arms from the rear

Guillotine—a leverage hold by which you entwine one of your legs around one of your opponent's legs while applying a headlock under one of his arms

Half-Nelson—a hold in which you use the back of the head for leverage after reaching under your opponent's arm from the rear

Hammerlock—a leverage hold on your rival's arm using his back as a fulcrum and prying with your forearm

Headlock—a grip about the head

Pin—a submission hold in which the opponent's arm or shoulders are held immobilized against the ground

Reversal—altering the control situation by maneuvering from the bottom position to the top position

Roll-Out—an escape move by which you roll rapidly with force in the same direction that your opponent's weight is concentrated

Side Headlock—a hold by which you encircle your foe's head with either one or both arms while positioned to his side; initiated while standing and used to force your opponent to the ground

Single Leg Takedown—any takedown maneuver involving a tackle of one of your opponent's legs

Sprawl—a rapid evasive maneuver to avoid being gripped by the legs; initiated when your opponent dives in low to attempt a takedown

Strangulation—see choke

Takedown—any maneuver that starts from a neutral position and leads to control from the ground

Throw—a means of knocking an opponent off his feet and aiming his back temporarily toward the floor by using his weight against him

Trip—a takedown maneuver in which you use your leg to unbalance the opponent

"FOUL" TACTICS

"Foul" tactics are those combat responses which have no precise, teachable form but are the result of pure survival instinct. They are effectively brought into play during infighting when all else fails.

1) HAIR-PULLING (for control over opponent)

examples

(a) hairpull and uppercut to face/throat
(b) hairpull and upward eye stab
(c) hairpull and upward knee blow
(d) hairpull and body slam takedown
(pull down from front or from behind)

- Each of the above involves but one motion.
- The hairpulling maneuvers are based on "chancery"—a favorite technique of ancient Greek pankratiasts who coupled the pulling of the hair with either a strike or takedown, or both.

2) BITING (for release)

- Never make a plan of biting!! Biting is efficient at close quarters when employed from a helpless position where your teeth just happen to be next to your opponent's flesh.
- Almost every part of the human anatomy is vulnerable to biting. The pain induced is enough to get to more enviable conditions.

3) EAR-PULLING (for release or control over opponent)

4) GROIN GRABBING (for release or control)

5) SKIN PINCHING (for release)

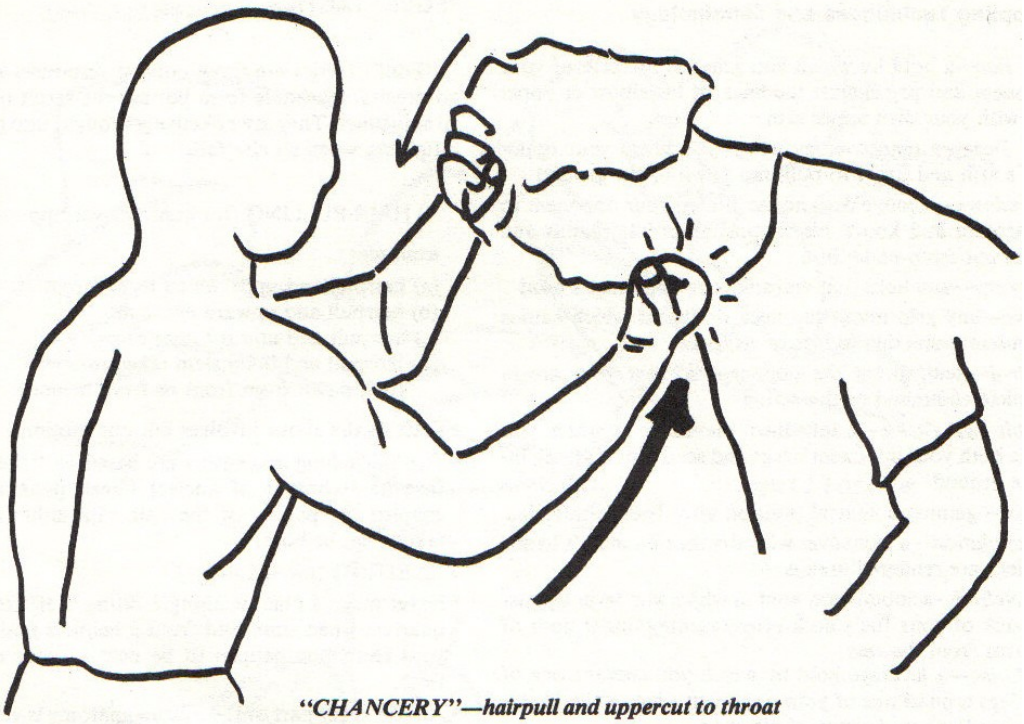
6) EYE GOUGING (for release or control)

- The ancient Greek pankratiasts, particularly the Spartan contingent, were quite fond of "foul" tactics, especially gouging the eyes. Although this is a most vicious action, gouging as a last resort is encouraged in life-or-death situations where anything goes.
- The thumb gouge, a quick jab of the extended thumb, is a most lethal attack. Any of the individual fingers can be used to "dig" as well.

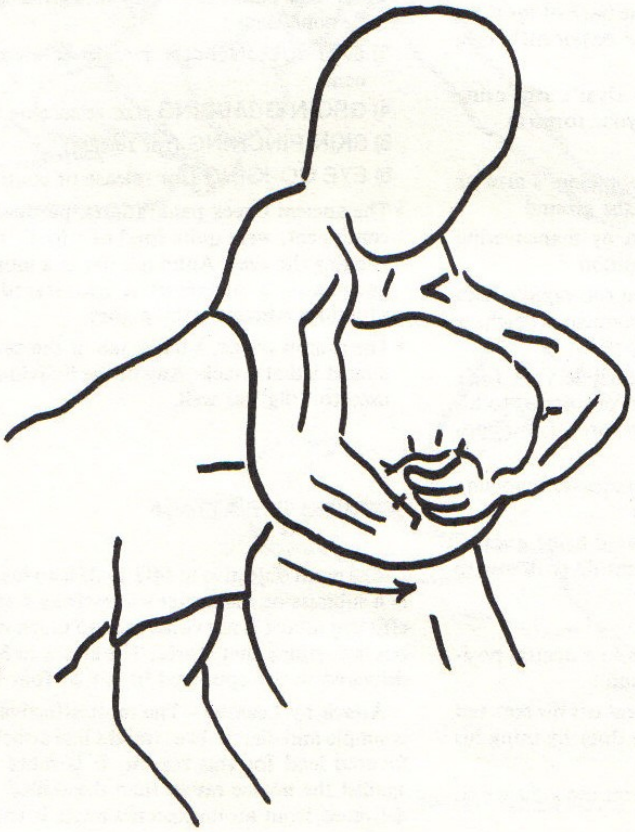
SCORING THE ATTACK

The main objective in MU TAU is to land a blow or apply a submission maneuver successfully and efficiently. The efficient attack is not concerned so much with perfect form but is anything that scores. The attack in MU TAU may be delivered to the opponent in any of four basic ways:

Attack by Leading—The most effective lead is one that is simple and direct. The straight line attack is normally the favored lead for this reason. It is more often employed against the novice rather than the skilled. One swift blow delivered from an unexpected angle is capable of scoring



"CHANCERY"—hairpull and uppercut to throat



side headlock
and eye gouge

cleanly without much opposition from the untrained man.

Attack by Deception—The attack by deception involves two distinct motions which are part of one motion. The first motion is a fake action while the second is a real assault. This type of attack is used more frequently against the skillful fighter than against the novice. Once an opening is created by a certain feint it should be attacked instantly with a follow-up action.

Compound Attack—This attack consists of a series of offensive moves delivered in a natural sequence. It is used particularly against the fighter who sports a tight guard which is difficult to penetrate with a single lead. The object is to place the adversary in such a position, or create such an opening, that the final blow of the series will find a vulnerable spot thus rendering the opponent helpless and "setting him up" for the finishing stroke. A compound attack includes combination punching, combinations of strikes and kicks, and takedowns either preceded by or followed by a hit.

Some moves seem to be "follow" actions in that they come after certain leads. For example, it seems natural to hit straight and then hook as it does to attack high and then low, or vice versa.

Attack by Counter—This is considered an advanced technique. It involves avoiding the opponent's lead and retaliating with a blow instantaneously.

The key principle in countering is a conditioned mind, one which reacts spontaneously to a specific situation. After hours of practice repeating certain leads and counter maneuvers, automatic responses develop. Such reflexive actions are essential to effective countering. Constant repetition creates a pattern of action in the nervous system which, ultimately, evokes the right counter to an opponent's lead in combat.

Chapter 5

Defense

Besides being the art of scientific hitting, MU TAU includes the art of defending oneself from oncoming assaults. The original pankration consisted of very few defensive moves, concentrating mainly on offense. As a result, many victors of a contest came away bruised and bloodied but in better shape than their defeated rivals. Thanks to the defensive skills adapted from Western boxing, however, the MU TAU practitioner is able to avoid such punishment.

No matter how hard a hitter you are, or how strong, there is that chance of meeting an adversary who is able to handle your blows. If you know nothing of defense and go into battle with a fellow who is going to trade kicks and punches with you, it normally follows that the tougher man with the more punishing blows will emerge the winner. Not so, however, with the fighter who possesses a good defense, for he can ward off the attack while landing shots of his own. The real science in combat is not just in knowing how to hit but in knowing how you can best elude the punches and kicks that are being hurled your way and how best to take advantage of the opponent's misses.

Scientific fighting is characterized by a constant shift between attack and defense, each being important and each depending on the other for successful execution. Without attack there is no real necessity for defense, and without defense there would be no attack.

In MU TAU, a strong offense is indeed the best defense especially since defensive skill is the foundation of attack. Without underlying defensive prowess there always comes a time when a good attack meets a better one. Then it is too late. While hitting is the basis of all combat, skill in the appropriate defenses makes it possible for the fighter to attack at the proper time. Defense, then, is the key to attack.

Rigid, passive blocking is absent in this art since such action tends to slow one's retaliatory capacities. MU TAU defenses are soft and evasive with the body in fluid motion. Deflecting or avoiding the force of an oncoming blow rather than meeting it head on with full resistance is stressed.

Hitting with effectiveness is a primary part of fighting, but you must not lose sight of the fact that defending yourself is what gives you your greatest aid in remaining on your feet to enable you to land those effective kicks and strikes.

You should always force your opponent to miss punches and kicks with the same effort that you exert to try to land your own blows. Though there is always the chance of getting hit during combat, it is your duty to avoid being hit hard and often.

When a blow or kick is thrown at you, you have a choice of several different ways of avoiding it. These include parries, evasions, blocks, and jamming.

PARRIES

- As in fencing, the parry is a defensive measure used to ward off or deflect an opponent's attack just before it reaches its target.
- The parry is a sudden movement performed with a sharp slap of the palm or wrist to the inside, outside, or onto an oncoming blow or kick, to divert the assault from its original path. It is a light, easy movement depending on timing rather than great force.
- A blow or kick is never parried until the last moment and always when close to the body. To reach out to parry an attack not only causes openings for counter-hits, but enables the opponent to change the direction of his blow. Therefore, parry late rather than early!!
- Dodging the body to the side or slightly back with a simultaneous parry (inside, outside, or downward) is effective in dissolving the actual force of the blow.
- The highest parry should not pass above eye level, the lowest parry at the groin. Never attempt to bend forth to parry a shot below the groin. This exposes the high target zone to attack.

- Either hand can be employed in the deflection but not both at once. Use one hand to parry, the other to counter.
- Never move your elbow out of position when parrying. If you do it is very likely that you leave your ribs unprotected. Simply move your hand and forearm as if they were on a hinge. Move them up or down and from side to side. The movement is always quick and easy with the elbow in.
- As you parry a punch, swing your head and body slightly in the opposite direction of the blow. This provides you with extra assurance that the attack will pass by harmlessly.
- The parry is an excellent defense against the lead jab or any straight-line offensive. Snappy hooking kicks can also be effectively deflected with a crisp slap of the palm and wrist.
- Head shots are parried to the right or left as are some body attacks. Blows to the mid-zone can also be parried downward. For example, a lead jab to the solar plexus can be slapped down with either hand and followed by a solid counter to the head region. The mid-area side-kick, too, can be diverted with a semi-circular downward parry and a simultaneous outside dodge.
- A precise slap block often serves as an attack in itself when it strikes a sensitive area of the striking arm or leg with stinging effect.
- A well-executed parry can throw your foe off balance placing him out of position to follow up with another attack.
- The CATCH is a variation of the parry useful against fast incoming jabs, rear thrusts, and hooks. In catching a punch, you simply trap the blow in the palm of your open rear hand just before the blow reaches its intended target.

In RIGHT on-guard

(a) Lead Hand (right)

Parry inside/outside/downward

(b) Rear Hand (left)

Parry downward/cross slap

In LEFT on-guard

(a) Lead Hand (left)

Parry inside
outside
downward

(b) Rear Hand (right)

Parry downward
cross slap

PARRIES

Like the catcher in baseball who mitts a pitcher's fast ball, you absorb the force of the punch by stiffening your wrist at the moment of impact.

- It is wise to be relaxed in your defenses. Never go out to meet a kick or punch in an effort to stop it. Such action weakens your protective shell. Instead, let the attacks come to you, brushing them aside with deft maneuvers.
- Against straight punches, a lead jab is parried with the rear hand and a rear thrust with the front hand. A lead hook punch or kick can be parried using the back of the wrist. An upward sidekick to the body can be parried to the outside or inside using a downward, semi-circular motion.
- Basic types of parries:

Lead Hand Parries

1) inside palm slap (high/medium)
2) outside wrist deflection (high/medium)
3) downward parry (medium/low)

Rear Hand Parries

1) cross slap (high/medium)
2) downward slap (medium/low)
3) outside deflection (high/medium)
4) catch (high/medium)

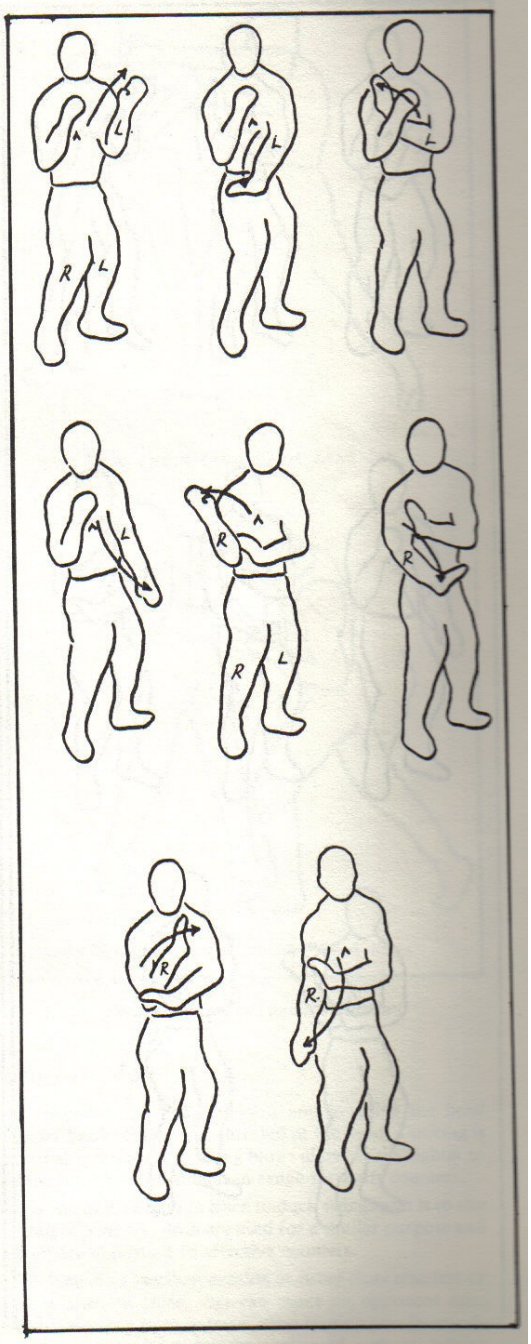
EVASIONS

- During combat, there involves much parrying for defensive purposes, especially with the rear hand so that the forward hand is free to hit. However, it is often a much wiser action to avoid a blow without using the hands at all. Such a ploy requires quick and agile evasiveness of the head, trunk, and feet. This elusory movement allows both hands to be free to counter upon the opponent's missed lead.

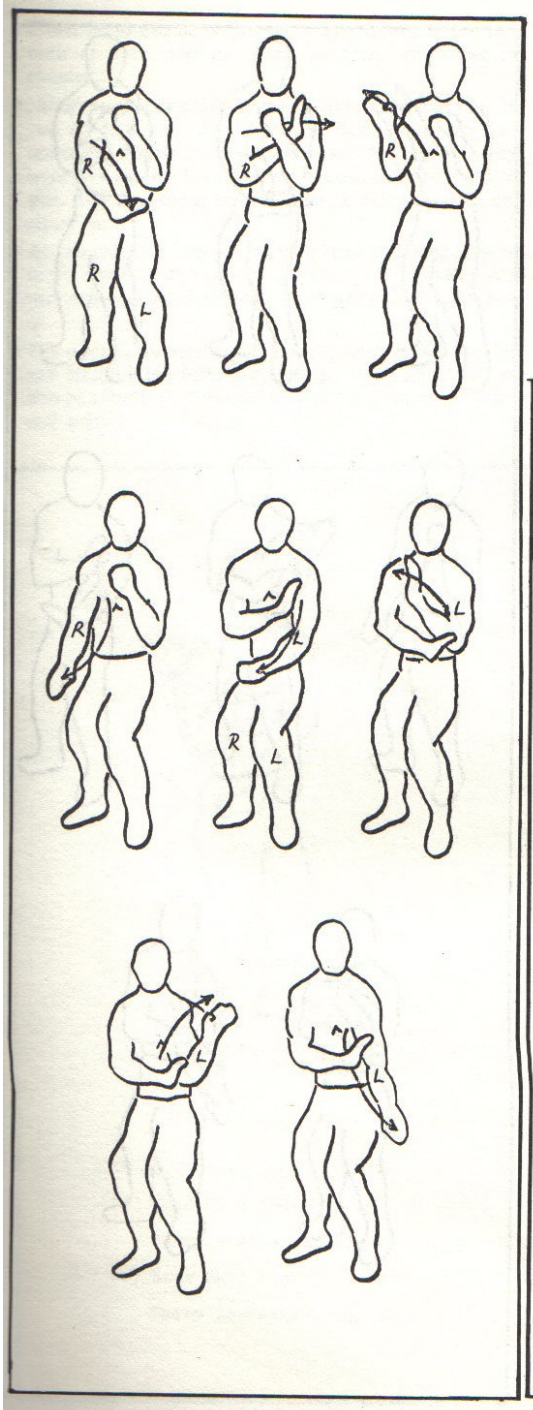
Types of Evasion:

Slipping

- Is to avoid a head shot by moving the head and upper body to the inside, outside, or rear without retreating footwork while still maintaining balance.
- Used mainly against straight leads and counters, a slip is performed without actually moving the body out of range. It calls for exact timing and judgment and, to be effective, must be executed so that the blow is escaped only by the smallest fraction. Performed suddenly, the slip contains an element of surprise and leaves the opponent wide open to a counter.
- Against straight hits for the face, slipping is more effective than blocking. It is a much faster action and leaves both hands free for punching.
- Slipping is very bewildering to an opponent and keeps



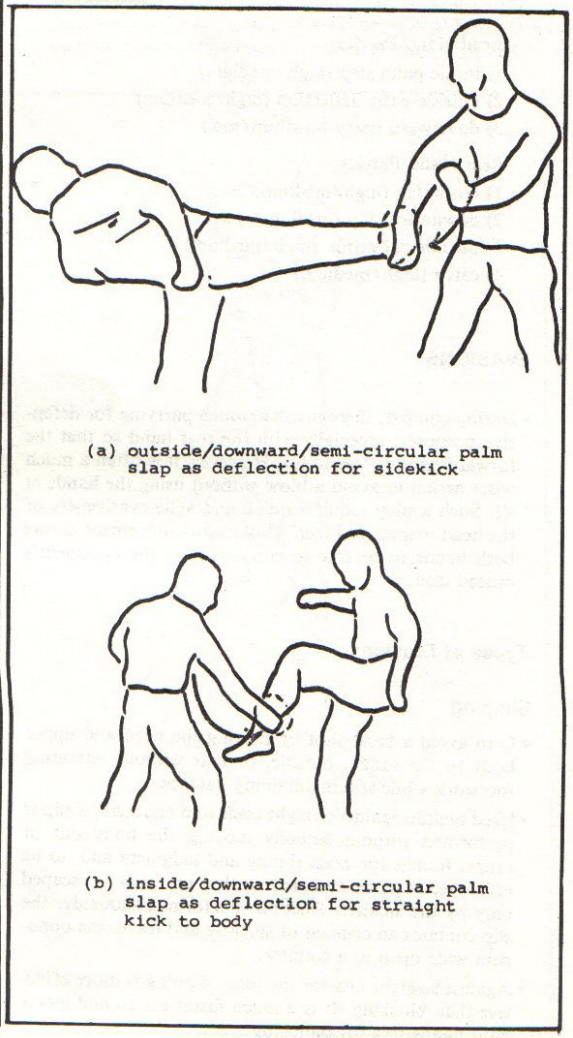
From the Southpaw Position



From the Orthodox Position

him uncertain about landing his blows. It also causes him to use up his strength, as nothing in fighting is more tiring than missing punches, because of the extra effort expended in recovering balance. On the other hand, by use of the slip, you can elude a strike with the least amount of exertion, and thus save strength and energy.

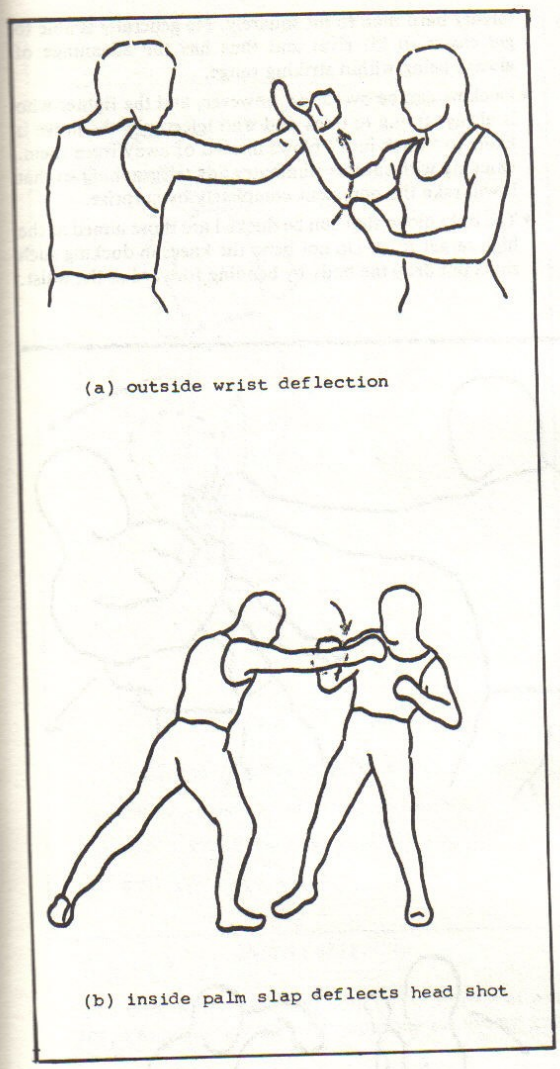
- Never start a slip until the blow is on the way, as it may be a trick to feint you out of position.
- It is possible to slip either a right or left lead, although it is safer and more common to slip a forehand strike. The outside slip (i.e. to the left of an opponent's right lead or to the right of his left lead) is the safest position, leaving the opponent unable to defend himself against a counter-blow. The outside of the foe's guard is best for pressing the attack.



(a) outside/downward/semi-circular palm slap as deflection for sidekick

(b) inside/downward/semi-circular palm slap as deflection for straight kick to body

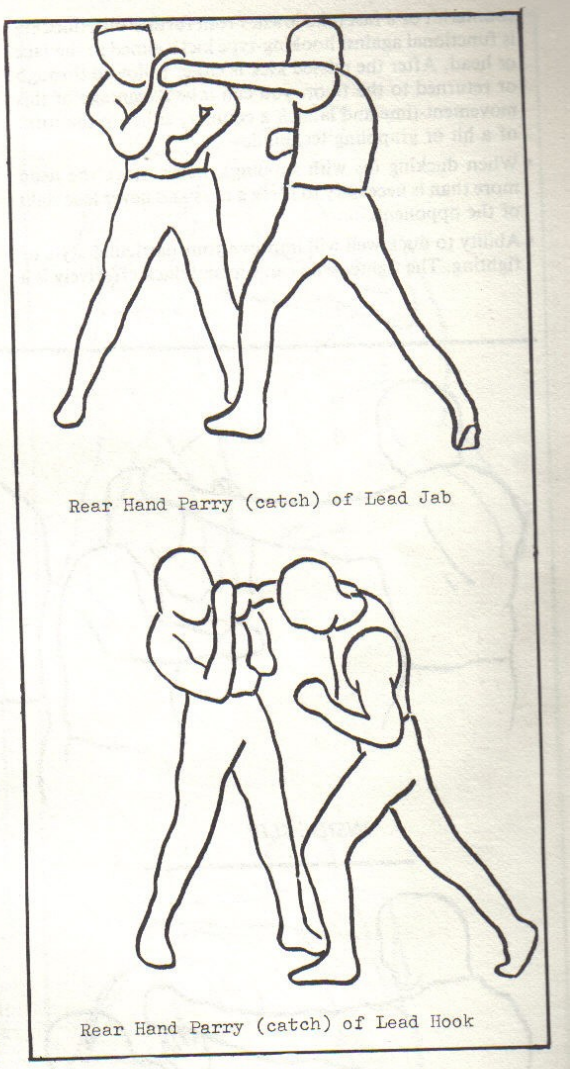
Parries against kicks (applications)



(a) outside wrist deflection

(b) inside palm slap deflects head shot

Parries against punches (applications)



Rear Hand Parry (catch) of Lead Jab

Rear Hand Parry (catch) of Lead Hook

Parries/deflections against punches

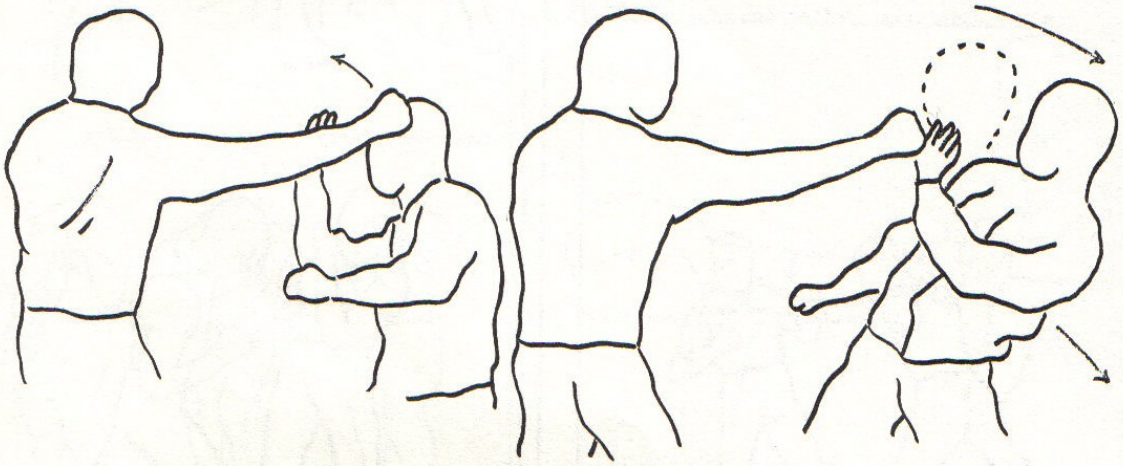
- Slipping the head back is a movement whereby you draw away from an opponent as he delivers his blow, thus making his punches fall short. This is a splendid move to confuse an opponent in an exchange of blows. It leaves you in a position to see and to take advantage of an opening. The upper body snaps back just enough to make the opponent miss and as his arm relaxes to his body, it is possible to move in with stiff counters. Either his jab lead will fall short, or he will get off balance giving you an opening for a lead hook.
- Slipping is a most valuable defense. It is the real basis of counterfighting upon which the science of attack depends.

Ducking

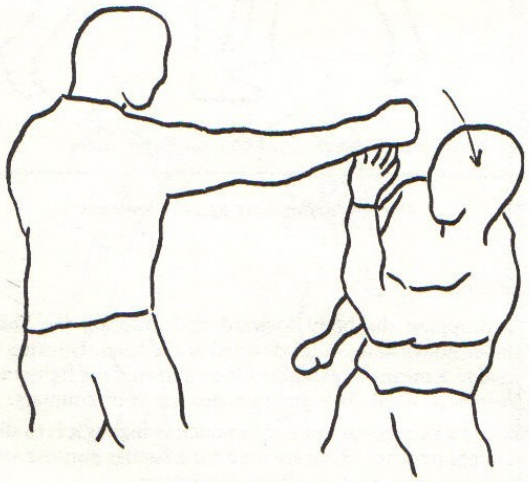
- Is dropping the body forward and lowering the head under hooks and swings directed at the head. Ducking is used as a means of escaping blows allowing the fighter to keep both hands free and in range for swift counters.
- It is just as necessary to learn to duck swings as it is to slip straight punches. Both are used for a similar purpose and both are important to effective counters.
- Ducking is an excellent evasion at either close quarters or from afar. In close, you can make an opponent miss without losing your balance, thus leaving you in an advantageous position for the option of a short, jolting

counterhit or a fast takedown. From further out, ducking is functional against hooking-type kicks aimed to the face or head. After the missed kick is either followed through or returned to the floor, you can take advantage of this movement-time and launch a counter, either in the form of a hit or grappling technique.

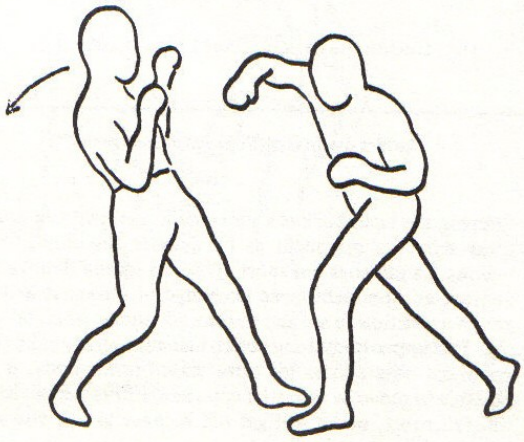
- When ducking (as with slipping), never move the head more than is necessary to force a miss and never lose sight of the opponent.
- Ability to duck well will improve your particular style of fighting. The fighter who can slip and duck effecively is a mighty hard man to hit squarely. He generally is able to get closer to his rival and thus has the advantage of always being within striking range.
- Ducking can be overdone, however, and the fighter who is always trying to duck and who telegraphs the move is liable to "duck into" blows instead of away from them. Ducking with success eliminates any telegraphing so that it will take the opponent completely by surprise.
- The only blows that can be ducked are those aimed at the high target zone. Do not bend the knees in ducking such shots but drop the body by bending forward at the waist.



INSIDE SLIP



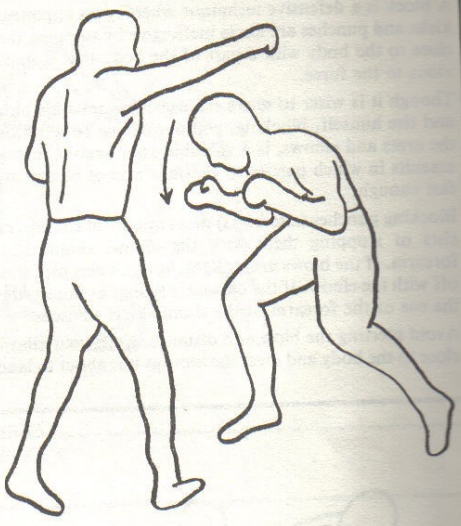
OUTSIDE SLIP

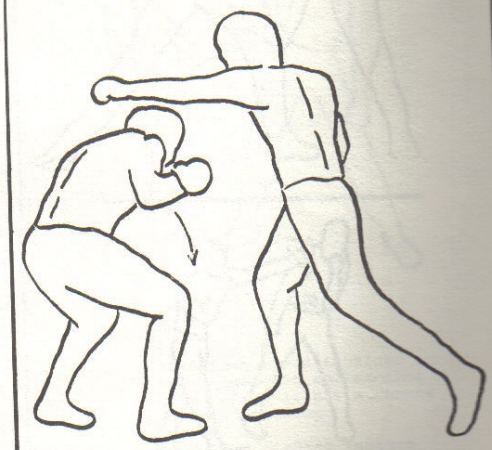


THE "SLIP-BACK"

Here the fighter throws his head aside, thereby causing the opponent's punch to pass over the right shoulder into space.

INSIDE SLIP





DUCKING

- Never duck without bringing your guard in front of your face to avoid the chance of an uppercut or upward knee attack.
- When ducking be careful not to duck too low as the closer the blow passes over your head, the better.
- Ducking is one of the best means of avoiding a strike when coming to close quarters for short arm blows, clinching, or grappling. Once the opponent's punch or swinging kick passes over you, he will be out of position and off balance. As such, he will be totally unprepared for your retaliation.
- To duck a lead hook, drop your head forward to the outside of the blow, leaning forward from the waist and slightly bending the knees, at the same time readying the lead hook to the body if an opening is presented. From this position you can very often make an opening for a rear hook to the midsection by quickly straightening up and raising your opponent's lead hand with your own lead shoulder.

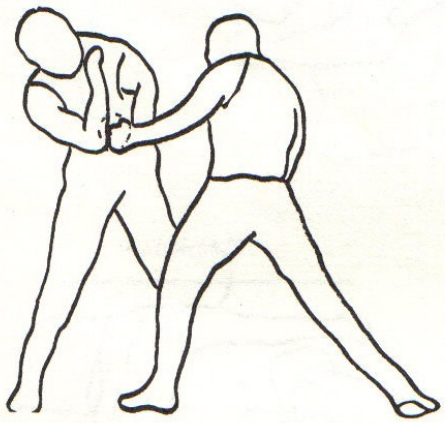
BLOCKING

- A block is a defensive technique whereby an opponent's kicks and punches are made ineffective by stopping them close to the body with a part of the body that is impervious to the force.
- Though it is wiser to make the opponent miss his blows and tire himself, blocking, without having to reposition the arms and elbows, is a valuable asset against surprise assaults in which parries or evasions cannot be executed fast enough.
- Blocking punches (and kicks) of an opponent simply consists of stopping them with the elbow, shoulder, or forearm. If the blows are straight, you can best pick them off with the elbow. If the blows are swings or hooks, then the use of the forearm or the shoulders is advised.
- Avoid meeting the blow at a distance. Keep your elbows close to the body and meet the blow as it is about to land.
- When learning to block, you should not obey the instinct to step back from the blow. You must hold your ground so as to stay in range for instant counterhits. Cultivate awareness of distance!
- Blocking requires closer quarters than does parrying. A block is a tight-range defense that has the advantage of position. Once you foresee a punch coming, you can easily check it and still readily counter since your feet have not altered their placement.

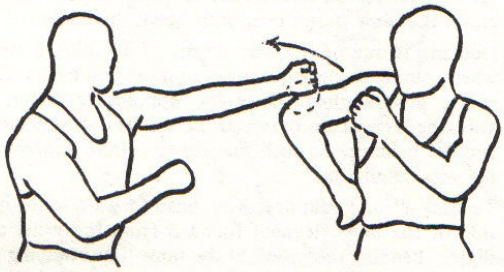
Types of blocks:

1) Elbow Block—is used against straight-line blows and kicks to the body. Against hooks and swings to the body, the trunk should sway slightly with the blow. The forearm must be straight and close to the midsection. The elbow is down and tight against the body, hand protecting the face. A

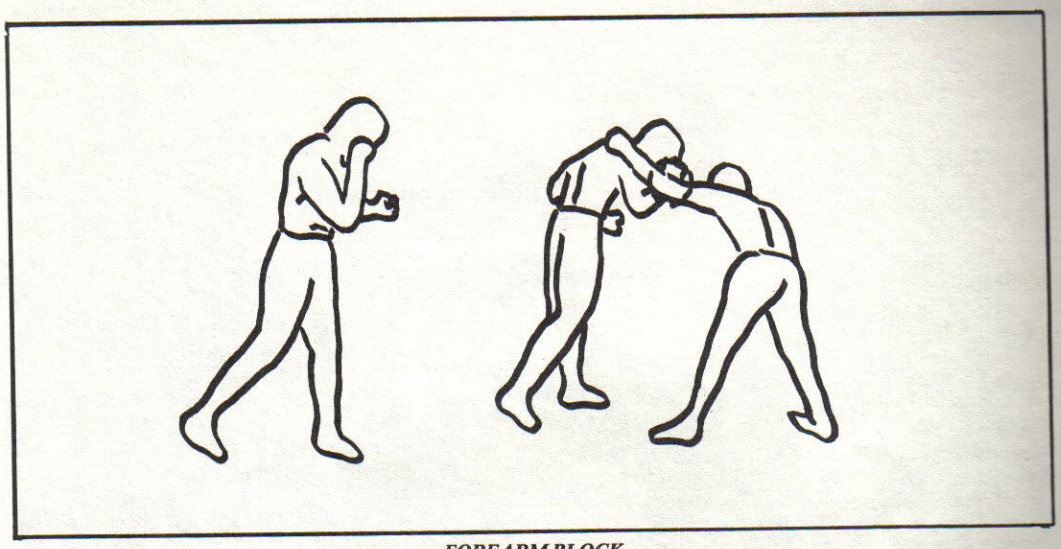
ELBOW BLOCKS



SHOULDER BLOCK



ELBOW-UP BLOCK



FOREARM BLOCK

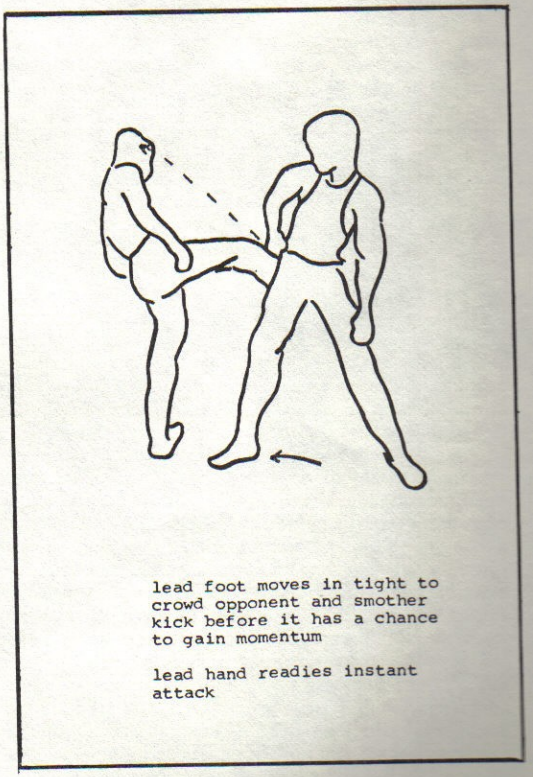
variation of this defense is the elbow-up block, a lifting of the elbow to deflect an oncoming hit. Speed is essential to this movement as the side of the body is exposed for a split instant.

2) Shoulder Block—is used against a straight rear thrust to the face involving a sharp twist of the waist such that the shoulder catches the blow. This move is also useful against hooks and swings to the head.

3) Forearm Block—is used against most kicks and punches to the body. The use of both forearms is referred to as a "full cover."

JAMMING

- Jamming is a defensive maneuver employed against kicking assaults. It is basically a sudden advancement which smothers one's kick during preparation. Once a fighter senses the intended kick, he will move in at top speed to arrest the full extension of the kicking leg.
- Jamming is actually a better kicking defense than retreating. By jamming, you come into range for an instant counter while backing away limits the opportunity to retaliate.
- This maneuver requires excellent timing and courage. If timing is faulty or if you fear being hit in the jamming process, you take the chance of running into a powerful kick.
- It is essential to attack as you jam. At the same time that you obstruct the kick, you force the opponent to lose balance, making it difficult for him to recover. It is during this moment of weakness that you press the attack unleashing your best shots.


lead foot moves in tight to crowd opponent and smother kick before it has a chance to gain momentum
lead hand readies instant attack

Jamming

Chapter 6

Advanced Techniques

As defense adapts to attack and attack to defense, a fighter can usually see the need for advanced techniques in light of the whole strategy of the art. However, advanced skills should not be attempted until the basics have been mastered. Advanced techniques in MU TAU include the counterattack, immobilizations, drawing, rolling, and angling.

The above-mentioned skills are usually concerned with a plan of action that depends on the outcome of a series of preliminary movements, by either one or both fighters. A good technician must develop the ability to anticipate openings or situations that might result from preliminary moves; he must possess the knowledge of when and how a skill should be used.

COUNTERATTACK

A counterattack is a blow, kick, or takedown given in reply to an opponent's lead. Not purely a defensive action, the counter uses the opponent's assault as a means to the successful execution of one's own offensive. It is a way of going onto the attack from being on the defensive. Any time that an opponent throws a punch or kick, he creates an opening for you. Countering exploits these openings and turns them to your advantage.

Countering is a most important and advanced phase of scientific fighting. A clever combatant can do more damage by his counterblows than if he were to continually lead. In fact, it is often wiser strategy to let the opponent lead, outguess him, out-maneuver him, and retaliate with "clean" shots to whatever opening presents itself.

Some fighters become specialists in countering, allowing the opponent to do all the leading. But even the most expert technician at counterattacking never launches his retaliation until his opponent's blow has first been thwarted. In combat there is an appropriate counter for every lead. The simplest counters are those that are used after the opponent's blow or kick has first been thwarted by a parry or block. Skilled fighters find it more efficient, however, to counter after avoiding an attack with some evasive action. Whereas parrying and blocking leave but one hand with which to counter, such maneuvers as slipping, ducking, and dodging allow a two-fisted barrage. Each preliminary evasion must be done with lightning rapidity and exact timing, forcing a miss and opening a target area. Effective counters also necessitate good judgment of distance, and effective feinting and drawing to get your opponent to lead.

The counterhit depends upon the method used in avoiding the opponent's lead as well as the lead itself. In other words, if the opponent jabs and the punch is avoided by an inside slip, a forceful rear hand blow might be recommended. The type of opening presented to you and the position that you find yourself in at that very moment determines the kind of counter you may employ.

In countering, always remember that the other fellow may be just as quick-thinking and clever as you and that when he leads, he is keeping in reserve his other hand and foot and may simply be luring you in for the kill. In this case, outguess him and beat him to the punch.

Defensive hitting (intercepting) is considered an advanced phase of counterattack when it is used to defeat an opponent's attack by hitting out as the adversary leads and landing on the target first. The concept behind this action is to beat your opponent to the score, stopping or interrupting him while he is in motion, just before he can complete his attack. The stop-hit must be performed without hesitation in order to arrest the oncoming blow as it is unfolding.

Usually the defensive hit takes the form of a straight-line thrust or kick which, due to its directness, can stop the assault quicker than an angular movement. The lead jab, leading vertical-fist punch, low downward sidekick, and the upward sidekick are the primary intercepting weapons.

When applying a defensive hit, be sure to secure correct distance, and carefully study the opponent's face in order to sense or "read" his intent. Once he commits himself to

COUNTERS WITH HANDS

	Lead	Counter
1.	jab to face	cross slap with rear hand to lead hook punch to jaw
2.	jab to face	inside slip to rear hook to solar plexus
3.	jab to body	downward slap with rear hand to leading vertical-fist to face
4.	back-fist to head	rear-hand catch to lead hook to body
5.	hook to head	rear forearm block to lead hook to ribs
6.	swing at head	duck to uppercut to groin
7.	uppercut to body	downward slap with rear hand to lead hook to jaw
8.	rear thrust to face	parry and eye stab with same hand
9.	upward sidekick	sidestep & parry with front hand to high back-fist
10.	upward sidekick	leg jam to straight vertical fist to face
11.	high hook kick	forearm block to vertical-fist to solar plexus
12.	high hook kick	inside palm slap to straight rear thrust to body

prepare an assault, you must use instantaneous, rapid-fire delivery to meet the attack, and stop it before it has a chance to materialize.

The success of intercepting depends upon a fighter's speed, reflexes, and the distance a blow has to travel. Wide hooking blows can usually be beaten to the score by straight-line hits. Poor offensive technique, namely swinging blows and telegraphing motions, will make a fighter more susceptible to interceptions.

It is not wise to attempt defensive hitting against an opponent of equal or superior speed, except when the assailant uses a blow or kick that has farther to travel than the stop-hit. For instance, a rear leg roundhouse kick can usually be intercepted by a straight punch or finger stab with the lead hand. Against the slower opponent, superior speed and timing will make it possible to counter and intercept even the straightest blow.

IMMOBILIZATIONS

An immobilization is a form of paralysis on the opponent's hand or leg that keeps him from moving that part of the body, offering you a safe position from which to strike. Immobilizations are of two types: trapping and jamming, which can be performed separately or together.

Trapping is an immobilization using the hand. It slaps down and holds the opponent's forward hand at the wrist or forearm, restricting its offensive and defensive capacities. Although either hand can trap, the rear hand is preferable so that the lead hand is free to attack concurrently.

Jamming is an immobilization employing the front leg. It is used to limit the function of the opponent's leading leg so that he is unable to kick, knee, or move away from the hand attack. Jamming is especially effective against the kicking specialist. As you sense the impending kick, step in abruptly and obstruct it. Hit out with your lead hand at the same time. Use a forward leap over the oncoming leg to cover the distance faster.

The leg immobilization is meant to tie up the opponent's leading leg, stopping any possible kick counter and restricting his mobility. It can be used in conjunction with the hand trap to form a "complete immobilization." By moving to the outside of his forward leg, you have obtained a safe position from a rear knee attack. It is even more efficient to stomp on his toes during the advance, conquering any attempt to retreat. If you step forcefully enough on his foot, the opponent may react by looking down, dropping his guard in the process. This is when to press your assault. If the opponent tries to back off, his efforts might provoke a wrenched knee.

Clinching

Clinching is a type of immobilization which involves holding an opponent's arms and tying up his legs in such a manner that he is unable to strike or kick when you come to close quarters.

Clinching is actually an emergency measure to help you

when in danger, when you have missed a blow and left yourself open to an easy attack. It should be used only as a last resort although it is often unavoidable when exchanging blows in close. Clinching is often the only defense one might have when cornered, when hurt, when fatigued, or when the eyes are temporarily blinded.

Do not wrap your arms around your opponent's neck or body unless attempting a takedown or grappling maneuver. Keep close to his body, locking both his hands and legs so that he cannot punch, elbow, or knee. When you break out of a clinch, do so quickly and be on your guard. You must be careful to be well-covered as there is no such thing as a "clean" break in an all-out fight. If you choose not to break, then go for the takedown.

DRAWING

Drawing means to get an opponent to lead with a certain blow by purposely leaving some part of the body unprotected. The purpose of drawing is to force a lead that will expose a man to a counterattack.

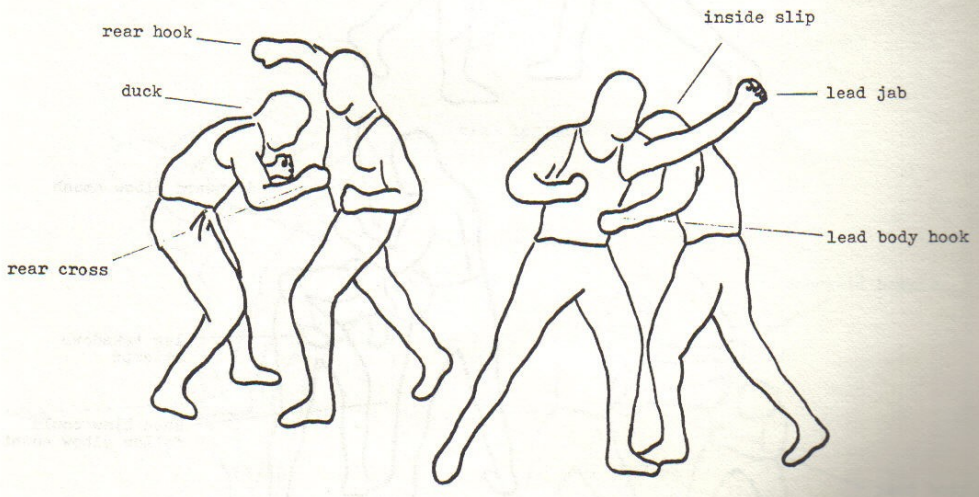
This technique is used primarily against an opponent who refuses to lead, or against a fighter with a pet delivery. By giving an opponent what appears to be an opening for his special blow, a fighter can use it to his own advantage by avoiding it and countering.

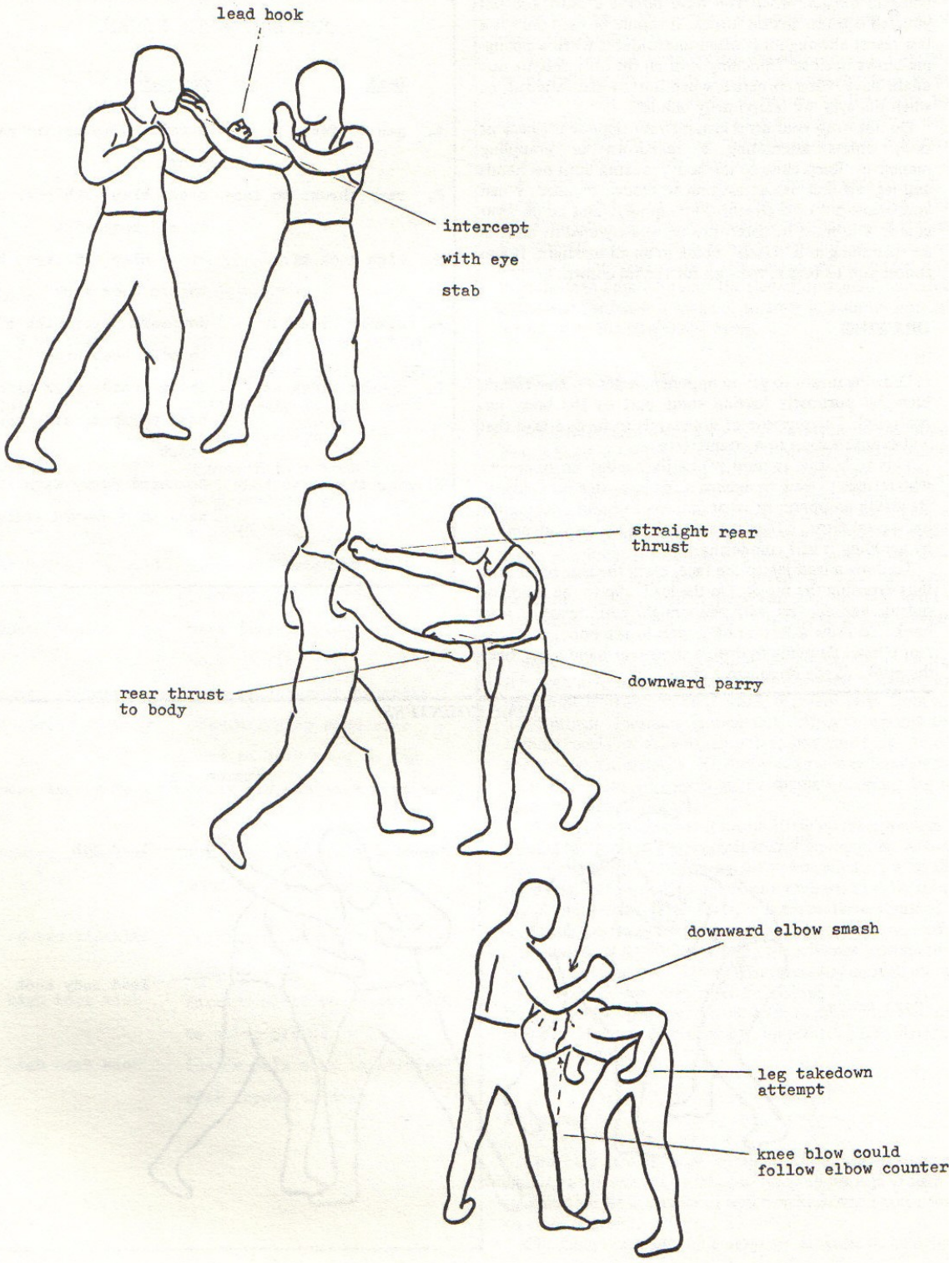
To draw a lead jab to the face, carry the rear hand low, thus exposing the target. On the lead, slip to the inside or outside and counter with the straight rear thrust or lead hook. To draw a lead hook punch to the body, raise the rear elbow. Be ready to drop a short rear-hand blow, over the hook, to the opponent's chin.

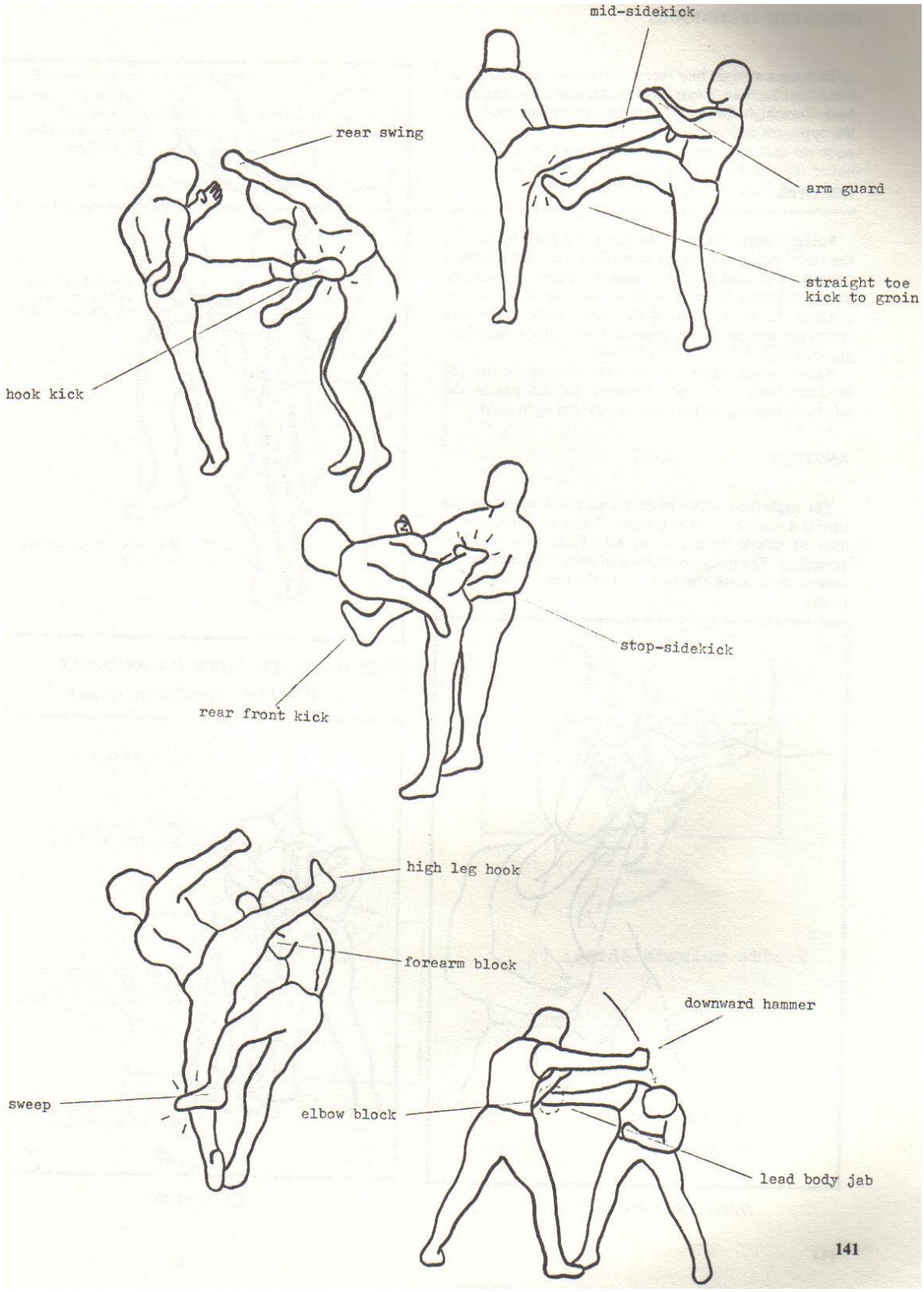
COUNTERS WITH KICKS

	Lead	Counter
1.	jab to face	outside slip to mid hook kick
2.	rear thrust to face	cross slap with rear hand to mid hook kick
3.	high hook kick	cross slap with rear hand to mid hook kick
4.	upward sidekick	downward parry with sidestep to high hook kick
5.	upward sidekick	dodge inside kick with lead hand parry to sidekick to chest
6.	rear thrust to body	downward parry with front hand to downward sidekick

SOME COUNTERS




lead hook
intercept
with eye
stab
straight rear
thrust
rear thrust
to body
downward parry
downward elbow smash
leg takedown
attempt
knee blow could
follow elbow counter


mid-sidekick
rear swing
arm guard
straight toe
kick to groin
hook kick
stop-sidekick
rear front kick
high leg hook
forearm block
downward hammer
sweep
elbow block
lead body jab

To draw a straight rear thrust to the head, carry the lead hand low. To draw a rear hand lead to the body, carry the lead elbow high. Be ready to throw a short lead hook over the opponent's blow.

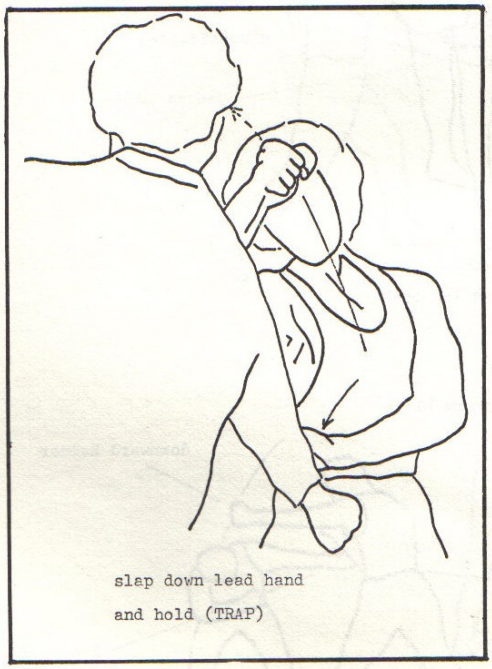
ROLLING

Rolling means nullifying the force of a blow by moving the body with it (i.e. in the same direction that the force travels). It is used primarily against hooked or swinging blows. Whereas slipping is done with the head, rolling employs the body. Even if the blow lands, the rolling technique dissipates the original force into a harmless, glancing tap.

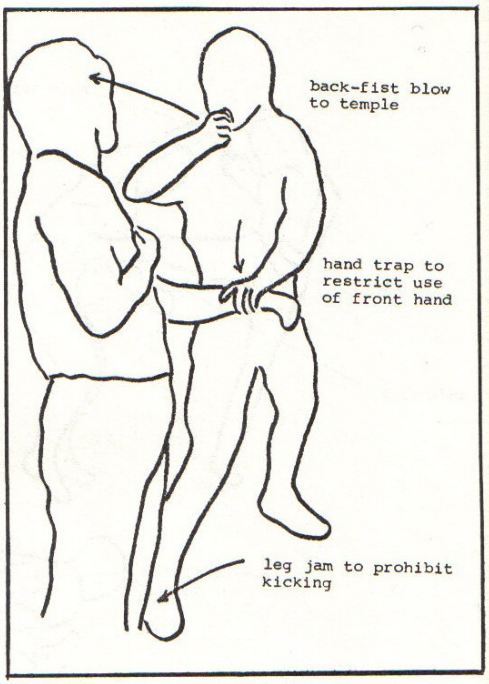
Against a lead hook, roll with the blow by moving the head and body in the same direction; roll left against the left hook and roll to the right against the right hook.

ANGLING

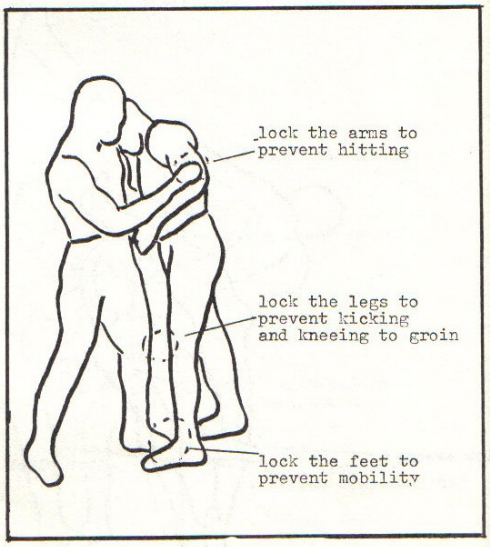
The angle from which to deliver an attack to your opponent is a crucial factor in combat. There are three specific lines of attack designated in MU TAU with countless variations. The body positioning of both you and your opponent determines the type of angle from which to hit from.



HAND TRAP AND BACK-FIST



HAND/LEG CHECK AND BACK-FIST
(Complete Immobilization Attack)



CLINCHING

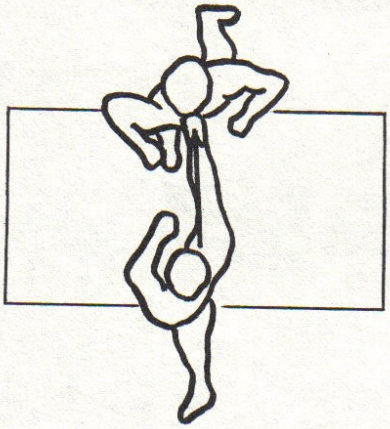
The angles of entry for delivering an attack are concerned with two points:

1) the critical distance line (at which you can be hit)
2) closing in at a 45-degree angle (centerline always well-covered)

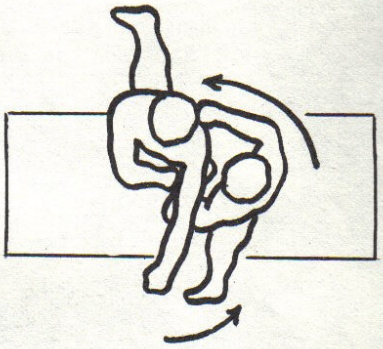
Always attempt simultaneous hand-traps with angular onslaughts. Once trapped from a 45-degree angle, the opponent will find it difficult to bring his free hand around to strike you. Also, check his legs for control over his movement. Do not permit the foe to escape this simple attack.

A skilled fighter will always attempt to attack his opponent from the blind side. He will also know what techniques are possible from each appropriate angle of entry.

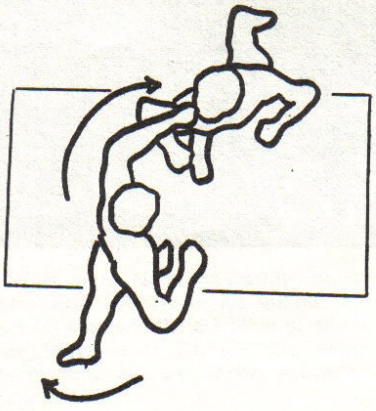
Angling



1) straight-on attack



2) outside angular attack



3) inside angular attack

Chapter 7

Strategy

Strategy is the innate ability to meet and successfully solve problems as they arise in combat. It is the faculty to effectively out-smart the opponent during the course of a fight. Such a tactic depends upon cool judgment, anticipation, opportunism, and the ability to think at least one move ahead. When combined with confidence and spontaneous reaction of the muscles and limbs, the fighter is able to express any movement as required by the situation at the moment.

A crafty fighter ascertains as soon as possible the opponent's weakness or strength, his favored means of attack, and his general manner of defense. It is an intelligent choice of action against the foe which is based on observation and analysis of his movements, his timing, his reactions, etc. It means making the opponent fight in such a way that he defeats himself.

The clever fighter uses his brains as well as his brawn, and tries to out-think and outguess his opponent rather than to outslug him. There is a vast difference between the mere use of the tools in a slugging match and the use of the tools in a scientific manner.

Scientific fighting is the use of the most effective means to combat an assailant, in which the weapons you use are those with which you are endowed by nature—your hands, feet, elbows, and knees.

If you develop science, and this can be accomplished only through continuous training, you will hold a big advantage over the fellow who relies wholly on his strength. It is a proven fact that the individual who possesses science and strategy along with hitting power is the toughest man to beat.

The scientific fighter utilizes blows and defensive moves which have proven most effective in his sparring experiences. He uses his brains in the execution of all his maneuvers, be they offensive or defensive. He studies every move of an opponent, then uses strategy and tactics to offset these moves.

The study of MU TAU is beneficial because it sharpens the brain. When integrated with one's muscular powers and his hitting ability, quick-thinking will ensure success in all parts of fighting action.

Above all things you should learn how to take a shot without losing your cool. The fellow who charges wildly, trying to overwhelm his opponent, is an easy target for the calm and clever fighter. The skilled fighter does not get nervous or rattled. The unskilled loses his temper and becomes angry which immediately gets him into trouble. You cannot see the openings your opponent offers and you cannot follow up good leads unless you stay cool and use your brains clearly.

SOME FIGHTING STRATEGEMS

1. Fighting craft (tactics) is applied successfully only when one has attained a degree of technical expertise. Once the physical mechanics are automatic, the mind is free to concentrate on discovering the opponent's reactions, anticipating his intentions, and strategically, devising tactics to defeat him.

2. A good fighter must be a quick thinker. Intellectual superiority has the advantage in combat between physically-equal fighters. When the fighters are of equal intelligence, technical knowledge can be the deciding factor.

3. Coordination of mind and body is the key to success in fighting. Mechanical perfection is useless without the ability to think and act in a flash.

4. The secret to fighting craft is to take advantage of the opponent's weaknesses.

5. A shorter man may compensate for his shorter reach by attacking to the closest targets or moving close for infighting.

6. Avoid the strengths of your opponent. If he is exceptional at kicking, you must not allow him any room to kick. If he is a defensive fighter, you must be careful not to fall prey to his game and exhaust yourself by continually attacking.

7. Against the calm fighter, you are wise to remain calm; against the nervous type, it is important to agitate him while you maintain your cool.

8. Tall fighters are usually slow (in comparison to shorter fighters) but their long reaches are dangerous, so keep a safe distance until you can gain infighting range.

9. Never attempt complex movements when the simple moves will do the job. Start your fight with the simple basics and introduce more intricate moves only when these do not succeed.

10. Watch your opponent!! Never look away from him in combat. To fight successfully, you must see all that goes on. The area to watch at long range is your opponent's eyes. When in close, look at your opponent's feet, waist or chest.

11. Try to keep your opponent on the defensive. Give him no rest and keep him thoroughly perplexed as to what you will do next. Hit and kick from all angles. Discover what bothers your opponent most and concentrate your attack on that flaw in his defense.

12. Keep moving, thereby preventing him from getting set to hit and making him miss. Circle and dodge his rushes. When he is off balance for a split second, be all over him.

13. Rely on safety leads (finger stab to eyes, low sidekick to shin, knee) to do the bulk of the scoring damage.

14. Don't waste motion or telegraph any blows. Attack with decision, confidence, accuracy, and great speed.

15. Use a variety of distractive actions to get an idea of how the opponent will react to certain moves.

16. Use your head and calculate your actions. Lose your cool and you might defeat yourself.

17. Be in top condition!!

18. Relax! Tenseness tightens the muscles and slows reaction time.

19. Appear confident at all times. If hurt or tired, try not to show it. Gain the psychological edge on your opponent if possible.

20. If the opponent is in range and you spot an opening, hit out spontaneously. Otherwise, you could be punched or kicked. Don't save your blows!! Take advantage of all opportunities.

21. Puzzle the adversary with a variety of maneuvers. Never repeat the same thing over and over.

22. NEVER underestimate an opponent—no matter how small or awkward he may seem.

23. Once infighting range is gained, stay in close and press the attack. Blast away with all you've got.

24. Fight with your brain, not with brawn.

25. Punch and kick according to the appropriate range. Don't try to strike from too far out or kick from in too close.

26. Attack only when there is a clear shot (i.e. a visible opening).

27. Never stop trying. Remember, it only takes one.

28. Against more than one opponent, obtain a position where there is plenty of room to move. Do not take to the wall or corner.

29. Always attempt to endure rather than fight. However, if combat is unavoidable, let loose with all you've got.

30. If the opponent's attention is distracted at any time (such as by a loud shout or brushing his hair from his eyes), attack instantly.

31. The outside of an opponent's lead leg is the safest overall position from which to attack. It allows for complete protection of the groin and enables you to blitz his blind side. Don't, however, become bound by this position as you must be able to strike from *all* possible angles.

32. Relate, through your innate sense of body feel, to the terrain on which you are waging combat. It is rather impossible, for example, to kick effectively when on lower ground or on ice (or any other such slippery surface).

33. Against a trained martial artist, the hands are often the best weapons. Against the untrained man, kicking is better. As to which is more valuable, one would have to say that hands and feet are of equal important, each having definite advantages in different situations.

34. Let your opponent determine the appropriate technique for you. Be ready to react instantly and intuitively to any attack or defense by complementing, not resisting, his force.

OPPONENT RELATIONSHIP

- Fighting is a matter of relationship, not in the sense of style versus style but in the reality of man against man.
- Since all opponents fight differently, you cannot cleverly design a plan in expectation of who you may combat next. Not all the same tactics will work against different individuals.
- When engaging the rival, relate to the following:

  1) size up your opponent: take advantage of his weaknesses while avoiding his strengths
  2) what is his physical frame in proportion to you? Is he taller, shorter, leaner, stockier? Does he have the reach advantage?
  3) how does he position himself?
  4) does he favor the left side or or right side or both? Does he hit off the lead side or the rear?
  5) does he prefer kicking over punching or vice versa? Has he preference to any one special technique?
  6) how does he move, fast or relatively slow?
  7) is he aggressive or cautiously passive?
  8) how does he react to your attack or defense?
  9) where does he expose himself for an attack?
  10) is he sure of himself? Is there any sign on his face that indicates self-confidence?
  11) does he appear to be in shape?
  12) does his ready pose reveal any distinct style of fighting? Is he a boxer, wrester, karateka, or what?
  13) is he partial to fighting from long range or in close?

- Psychologically, you must take charge. Know yourself and radiate an inner sense of supremacy!!
- Once the opponent is struck hard, he loses his composure and mental poise. It is precisely at this stage of the game that you press the attack.

• The initial scoring blow may often decide the outcome of the battle. Try to land a telling blow first. If you are hit at the outset, recover and rally back.

Against the tall opponent:

Considerations

1) has more area to protect
2) is commonly slower
3) has considerable reach
4) possesses extreme power

Tactics

1) keep moving
2) offset reach advantage by assuming safe outside range or moving in close
3) work inside opponent's arms
4) no high kicking in early stages
5) low kick to extended leg

Against the croucher:

Considerations

1) difficult to hit squarely
2) fights from a shell, well-covered up

Tactics

1) sidestep and counter
2) use short upward blows like uppercuts and knee smashes
3) if a hit is scored, follow up. If the blows are missed, clinch and grapple.

Against the rusher:

Considerations

1) typical of street-brawling tactics, the rusher will attempt to force you off-balance
2) the rusher is the unskilled who must charge in blindly in his efforts to score

Tactics

1) use lateral movement, dodging every rush
2) step in and jam, hitting at the same time
3) stop-kick at forward leg and follow up

Against the slugger:

Considerations

1) is a dangerous opponent in close
2) will rely on hooking blows, not straight hitting
3) packs a lethal punch with either hand
4) heavy hitters must "get set" in order to deliver their blows

Tactics

1) keep moving; don't allow the opponent to get set. The inability to get set will lessen the slugger's power and make him less dangerous
2) attack suddenly and move out immediately
3) quick, snappy hits. Don't slug!!
4) keep at bay with straight-line offensives

Against the kicker:

Considerations

1) kicking expends more energy than punching
2) the kicker needs room to deliver his kicks effectively
3) kicking packs a resounding wallop
4) one who constantly relies on long-range kicks is possibly weak with his hands in close

Tactics

1) step in tight and smother use of his legs, following up with crisp hand blows
2) jam the legs and counterpunch
3) neutralize the main kicking leg by dislocation via low kick or sweep
4) grab the kicking leg and swipe the supporting leg

Southpaw tactics versus orthodox stancer:

1) move away from orthodox fighter's right hand and foot by circling to the right
2) maneuver orthodox stancer out of position by moving in and to the right
3) gain a position placing the right lead foot on the outside of opponent's left front foot
4) once the orthodox stancer has been maneuvered out of position, keep him off-balance by continuing to circle to the right and by throwing rear hooks and straight lefts to the head and body

Orthodox tactics versus southpaw stancer:

1) move away from southpaw's left hand and foot by circling to the left
2) maneuver a southpaw out of position by moving in and to the left
3) gain a position placing the left lead foot on the outside of opponent's right front foot
4) once the southpaw has been maneuvered out of position, keep him off-balance by continuing to circle to the left and by throwing rear hooks and straight rights to the head and body

• Do the opposite of what your opposition specializes in. In other words, fight the boxer, box the fighter, kick the puncher, etc. Do not fall prey to the strengths of your adversary.

STREET-SAVVY

There is a world of difference in meeting an enraged attacker in the street, and meeting a fellow competitor in a tournament or contest. What is useful or appropriate in a match may easily prove suicidal in an encounter under real combat conditions.

In MU TAU, we take a different approach, both technically and psychologically, from that of "classical" martial arts. In principle, there are underlying factors that determine victory or defeat in a toe-to-toe battle.

1. *Fight Dirty.* Never use your bare hands when there is

anything around you can pick up and hit the opponent with.

2. *Attack Critical Targets.* In a serious encounter, go right for the eyes, throat, groin, or knee of your adversary. Do not waste valuable time or energy shooting at lesser "vital spots." Under stress of anger, fear, rage or fury, the human body becomes so abnormally powerful and resistant to attack that only the most crippling techniques stand any chance of real success.

3. *Don't Be Defensive—Attack The Attacker.* The only strategy that wins in an unrestrained fight is the element of *surprise,* coupled with the best offensive onslaught. When the attacker initiates his assault, *attack him.* Blocking, dodging, averting, and avoiding are all useful defensive ploys but the quicker you land your own crippling blow, the sooner you'll insure your own safety. The aim should be to-launch your attack during the moment that your opponent is preparing to deliver his.

4. *The Simple Techniques Work Best.* Be very certain that you avoid confusing what looks pretty with what is functional. The best techniques for street survival are the simple, economical ones. In a fast exchange, when things happen close and without warning—and in everyday street attire—only the very simplest of techniques, executed ruthlessly and with power, can be trusted to do the job.

5. *Be In Top Shape.* Physical conditioning is the most neglected phase of actual, practical self-defense training. One's degree of physical strength, speed, agility, and stamina comprise at least 50 percent of your fighting "tools" in the street. In preparation for hand-to-hand combat, it is wiser to stress conditioning over quantity of technique.

6. *Don't Go To The Ground.* One must attempt to stay on his feet if humanly possible. If you have downed your opponent, finish him with toe kicks to the temple and kidneys or with heel stomps to the body. Self-defense is not "sporting" in any sense of the word, so if you drop your rival during the course of a fight, be certain to finish the job.

In a combat-grappling situation, rip for the eyes and throat without even thinking. The rule, however, is to stay on your feet. Go to the ground only when you cannot avoid doing so.

7. *Expect To Get Hurt.* Regardless of how tough you are convinced you are, expect to absorb some punishment. The seasoned combatant knows the folly of expecting to emerge from a fight unscathed. His goal instead is to emerge victorious, with fewer and less serious injuries than he has inflicted upon the opposition.

If you are attacked by a knife-wielder, the chances of not getting cut are very slim. Cuts are not too serious when taken on the arms and legs. The thing to avoid is a stab into the throat, chest, and stomach. Perhaps the wisest choice of action here is to stay at a safe distance and attack the nearest targets to you. Once you can maneuver inside, attack the eyes or groin.

8. *If An Attack Is Imminent, Act.* Go into action immediately, not after deliberation or attempting to "warn" the opponent. Any fore-warning actually fore-arms your foe and remember, one of your greatest assets is the element of surprise.

9. *Be Alert At All Times.* All of your skill, all of your power, all of your training will be worthless if you are taken by surprise. Being constantly aware of your surroundings and knowing that a violent attack might come at any time, can prepare you and save your life.

10. *Be Spontaneous.* It is impossible to predict when or how you might be attacked, so rehearsing certain responses to given situations is unrealistic. Instead, your objective should be to develop spontaneous reactions to everchanging combat conditions. This is best accomplished through sparring full-contact with a live, non-cooperative partner.

By carefully utilizing these ten strategic points of MU TAU, you will increase your readiness for coping with serious attack on the street.

Chapter 8

Training

Training was always important to the pankratiast. A competing fighter had to stay in top physical condition at all times. Training sessions were a daily routine and were strict no-nonsense affairs. The strong mind, strong body adage that became synonymous with the Greek athlete was constantly instilled in the fighter by his coach or trainer.

Besides the conditioning exercises that all fighters are accustomed to, the pankratiast also specified the development of strong neck and abdominal muscles. These areas had to be made powerful in order to withstand the force of blows directed there. A pankratiast practiced various punching and kicking drills as well. What Plato called *skiamachia* (Greek: to fight with shadows) was an ancient form of shadow kickboxing whereby the practitioner flailed the air with his hands and feet in an improvised manner. This was a favorite method of training in antiquity, engaged in by all pankratiasts.

Most of the training was performed in a specially equipped room (korykeion) in the palaestra, the Greek "wrestling school." This room featured various types of punching and kicking balls (korykos) suspended from the beams of the ceiling. The punch ball was used for purposes of developing a strong punch and to build a muscular torso capable of withstanding punishment in actual combat. It was a bag filled with fig seeds or meal, and was hung at head level. After striking the ball full-force with his fist, the pankratiast would allow the ball to slam him in the chest, back, and stomach upon its rebound. There was another larger sandbag hung about two feet from the floor to develop kicking power. The old-time fighters also toughened parts of their feet by repeatedly kicking against a tree trunk. Sparring with softly-padded gloves (spheres) and earguards (amphotides) was regarded as the best training of all as it came closest to the actual contest itself.

Though the methods of training have remained quite similar to those of the past, the introduction of modern equipment has updated the techniques of the ancient art. MU TAU academies are well-equipped, utilizing all the training gadgets available to the present-day martial artist.

PSYCHOLOGICAL CONDITION

An individual may possess all the physical gifts possible—speed, co-ordination, power, etc. The body may seem ready for extreme exertion yet the individual may be a poor competitor. It is perhaps easier to prepare the body than it is to prepare the mind. It is necessary for the athlete to discipline his thinking, control his emotions, and dispel fear and worry.

Attitude—To be a really good martial artist, one needs a winning attitude and fighting instinct. An inner psychological desire is necessary for readiness, particularly in violent activities. Self-control must be well-learned or else emotional tension will result in a loss of technical precision and fighting skill. A practitioner must force himself at all times in order to release the tremendous reserve power in the human body. Extraordinary effort and the determination to win at all costs will overcome any amount of pain and punishment. Whether it be in self-training or in actual combat, one must strain to his capacity, driving himself longer and harder than normally required. It is this attitude that makes a great athlete.

Courage—Courage is one of the most important requirements of athletic conditioning and combat participation. There are many who fear any activity in which there is personal contact. In truth, they are only afraid of the idea of being hurt, not of actually being hit. The task in any contact combative art is to personally overcome this fact.

Practical experience under realistic conditions is the key to developing sureness and self-confidence. One must familiarize himself with how to "take" punishment as well as how to "give" it. His actual training must closely resemble the real thing in order that his courage can grow through this process. He must not hold back or else he will always have doubts about his "true" fighting attitude.

Mind Discipline—Conditioning of any sort means discipline, discipline of the will and through the will, the

body. Discipline in conditioning means creating an attitude, a mind set toward a desired end. The end results are really the most important, training only becomes the means to the end. Discipline is the crucial factor here.

Training should be made a strict discipline. It will require procedures which lead to proper attitudes and habits of health and life. It will also mean sacrifice of many acts—ease, comfort, and all forms of dissipation. It takes a strong incentive to be able to enforce such an existence but in so doing, the concentrated effort toward a goal must loom above all else in one's mind.

Psychology of the Champion

- The champion is not merely the average athlete but is a superior individual in every sense of the word.
- Quitters never win and winners never quit!!
- A strong distinguishing characteristic of a champion is that of his hatred for losing. To a champion each mock battle is not just a matter of winning or losing a game, but a subconscious matter of a struggle for life or death. Thus, if a champion loses, he considers himself, in a sense, as having been killed.
- The more a competitor commits himself totally to an activity, the faster he will progress.
- The true champion must also accept defeat in the same manner that he does winning. He must not blame anything or anyone other than himself for losing. Making up excuses is the sign of poor attitude and improper mental development. One must accept the fact that there is always someone better. If losing results in harder training efforts, then such an experience has been constructive.
- The most notable defense mechanism against losing is that of the "killer instinct". This killer instinct is most readily seen in contact sports. It refers to the idea of "kill or be killed".
- Closely akin to the killer instinct is the feeling of building up a 'prior' hatred for the opponent. An exceptional athlete can actually will himself into hating a person for even the slightest fault before he even contests him.
- When practicing or contesting, the athlete must concentrate all his attention to the task at hand. Nothing should enter his mind other than the activity confronting him.
- In Western philosophy we try to fill our minds in order to gain knowledge. In the Eastern philosophy one empties his mind to absorb something. Both concepts stress losing oneself in the activity, unconscious of time or space, but totally immersed in 'being'.
- In a well-adjusted individual, frustration and anger from defeat is self-directed.
- Progress in building the body is made in the "fatigue zone". This means that one must persist even when tired. Though the body cries out for rest, the athlete must fight the impulse to quit and resist giving in as if it were a matter of life and death.
- There is no substitute in any athletic endeavor for good hard practice sessions. While a tough training program will build one physically, it also adds to the psychological makeup of the superior athlete. An athlete who has trained diligently and has gone through the tortures of long rigorous workouts is less likely to quit mentally.
- The sympathetic and parasympathetic systems of the body are associated with fight or flight. The sympathetic system is geared for action, while the other is geared for restoring and preserving the body's reserve. The task is to train the sympathetic system so that when a small voice inside (parasympathetic system) says, "I can't take any more", it is answered by, "Yes, I must continue".

The Flowing Energy (Pneuma)

- When we get totally immersed in a sport or creative act, we lose sense of time and the external world. Instead, we experience "flow"—the ecstatic feeling that all is going just right.
- Flow develops when we are completely involved in what we are doing. In this state the individual loses a self-conscious sense of himself and of time. He gains a heightened awareness of his physical involvement with the activity. The person in flow finds, among other things, his concentration vastly increased and his feedback from the activity enormously enhanced.
- Though the feeling of flow varies in intensity, it is often acute. One is in an ecstatic state to such a point that he does not exist.
- Comparable to the Japanese ki, the Chinese chi, and the Indian prana, the ancient Greek interpretation of flow, "pneuma", combines "positive thinking" (mind over matter) with physical energy. This unification of psychological certainty and raw power is the essence of flowing energy in the martial arts.
- Everyone has the potential for this flowing energy. Under certain circumstances, in emergency situations, this energy appears to be utilized by us all. Something in the mind triggers the body to react to the task at hand, flowing extra energy out of the individual.
- Externally, the terrific power of punches and kicks is due largely to the flowing of this energy. Where a small frame may seem physically impossible to impart such force, a superior development of internal energy accounts for this incredible strength.
- Once you understand how to flow your energy, it becomes automatic, like breathing. In flow there is a sense of being lost in the action. There is no sense of the self in the period of flow but there is a merging of action and awareness. Thought destroys flow.
- Flow is a floating psychophysical action in which the individual is aware of his actions but not aware of his awareness.
- Flow can make one feel an almost Godlike sense of control. All the dichtomies, polarities, and conflicts of life are resolved.
- Another factor in flow is the clarity of response that the

person gets from the activity. The feedback in sports is a good example; the tennis player knows instantly whether his shot is a good one, as does the marksman. It is a trifle more subtle in the creative arts. The performer must get immediate responses from an internal sense of 'rightness'.

- Pneuma is not just a "mental power" but is also another related energy that flows through the body. The goal of the practitioner is to develop his sensitivity to an ultra-performance point so he can call up this energy at will, in any situation.
- To flow, you must relax but stay alert. Be fully aware of what is happening in the immediate instance. Know what your body is doing.
- The blend of alert mind with relaxed body makes us ripe to experience the flowing energy.
- Pneuma will not work if there are any doubts. As soon as you even hint negativeness, you lose the flow of your energy.
- The highest level of cultivating pneuma is the combination of physical vigor with complete mental awareness.

PHYSIOLOGICAL CONDITION

Diet—The active athlete who trains several hours every day must eat a well-balanced diet, with emphasis on proteins. The diet should include lean meats, fresh fruits and vegetables, whole-grain cereals, eggs, and low-fat milk. The athlete should eat a good breakfast, a light lunch, and a substantial dinner. It is also recommended that he drink plenty of water for replenishment but not to the extent of bloating himself. Rich foods such as pastry, cream, fat meats, and fried foods should be avoided. Foods that are boiled, baked, or broiled are much better for you. It is also wise to supplement one's regular diet with vitamin tablets, particularly C for energy and E for speed and stamina. When you pursue rigorous training on a regular basis, you burn up a lot of energy. You must therefore tailor your diet so that you eat the right foods that are nutritious, and provide you with extra energy.

Sleep and Relaxation—Proper rest is as necessary to an athlete as correct diet or special training. Any strenuous activity breaks down the cells, liberates lactic acid and other waste products into the blood, and uses stored-up energy. Sleep is the period when nature replenishes and muscles grow. It is important to realize the value of sufficient rest and relaxation, particularly during the more strenuous training periods. Not only is interest maintained and learning heightened, but efficient performance is continued longer.

The martial artist, then, must maintain good health and adhere to strict training procedures. Good nutritional meals, plenty of sleep, no smoking or drinking alcoholic beverages, and a great deal of exercise are important aspects of an athlete's routine. An athlete must learn early that there is no substitute for good condition. Condition means exercise and exercise means work.

WARMING UP

Warming up is a process where the body is prepared for rigorous physical activity due to various physiological changes that take place within the body. The main purposes of warming up are to raise both the general body and deep muscle temperatures and to stretch the ligaments and other collagenous tissues in order to make supple the body. As cellular temperature increases it is accompanied by a corresponding increase in the speed of the metabolic processes within the cells, since such processes are dependent on internal temperature. There is also a speedup in the transmission of nerve impulses which results in an increase in the athlete's physical working capacity.

One of the real values of warming up is in its use as a preventive measure. Adequate warmup prevents strains and muscle tears that would probably occur if the athlete went into full performance without such a preliminary. There is also a psychological effect inherent in a warmup since it helps the athlete achieve a state of mental readiness.

Warmup procedures should consist of various limbering and toning exercises. These procedures should mobilize the body for action and make it supple and free. They must be of sufficient duration and intensity to raise deep tissue temperatures without developing marked fatigue. When the athlete attains a state of sweating, he has raised his internal temperature to a desirable level.

After completing the general warmup exercises, one should progress to those that are specific for his event or activity. He should start at a moderate pace and then increase the tempo as he feels body temperature and cardiovascular increases taking place. The closer the warmup period is to the actual performance, the more beneficial it will be in terms of its effect upon the performance.

Repetitive stretching of the collagenous or fascial ligamentous tissues over a long time span permits the athlete to obtain an increased range of motion. Good flexibility increases the athlete's ability to avoid injury. Since it permits a greater range of movement within the joint, the ligaments are not so easily strained or torn. It also permits him a greater freedom of movement in all directions.

The athlete who gains improved flexibility through preliminary stretching is better able to avoid a potential injury-provoking situation. In addition, when such a situation is unavoidable the joints involved are far more stable and can withstand a stress or torque considerably in excess of that which can be resisted by a less flexible person. Increased flexibility further aids to reducing impact shock encountered in contact sports or in activities where the body comes into forceful contact with a relatively unyielding object.

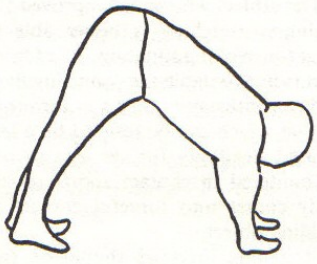
Stretching exercises should be emphasized during the warmup period. Good flexibility makes it possible to have proper body alignment which is necessary for graceful, efficient movement. To perform the high kicks with speed and relative ease, the practitioner must develop the increased range of motion in his joints. This may be done by employing phasic motions or by static motions. Phasic movements are jerky, bouncing-type actions that are not

easily controlled. Static stretching involves very slow movements that push beyond the tolerance point for pain. Though some degree of discomfort should be experienced, one must be careful not to stretch so far as to cause injury. After a muscle group has been stretched it is wise to relax the muscles and shake them vigorously.

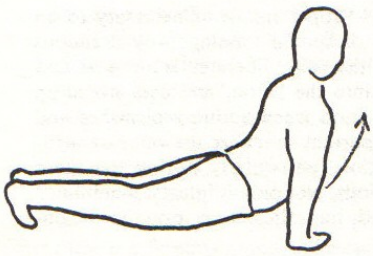
To warm up, the MU TAU trainee selects light, easy exercises to loosen his muscles in preparation for more strenuous work. Usually, he begins by exercising the neck muscles and works down to the legs. In this way all of the body parts are warmed up and stretched. Each exercise should begin slowly with increasing vigor to achieve a warmed-up condition. The rate of progress from slow to vigorous movements depends upon individual and environmental factors. Longer time should be spent on warming up in the morning than in the afternoon. One will also tend to advance more slowly on cold days than on warm days. Due to the many modifying factors it is impossible to prescribe a specific time period for each warmup exercise. Generally, fifteen to twenty minutes is adequate.

a) neck rolls

b) trunk bends



1.



2.

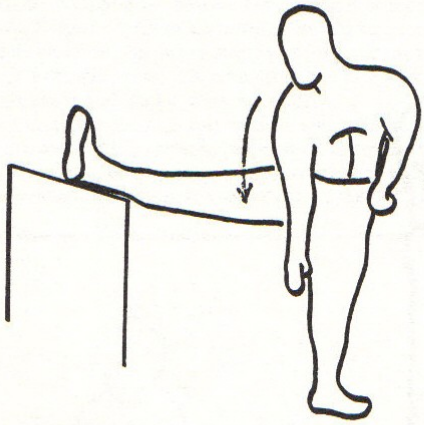
c) cat-stretch

Warming Up

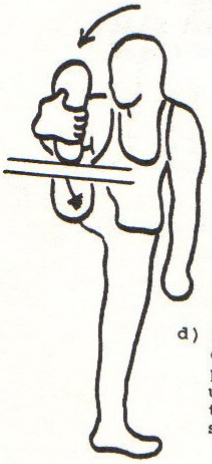
a) leg on bar; hands hold knee down and flat; bend forward from waist touching forehead to knee or shin (15 reps each leg)

b) toe touch

Leg Stretching



c) downward tension on leg

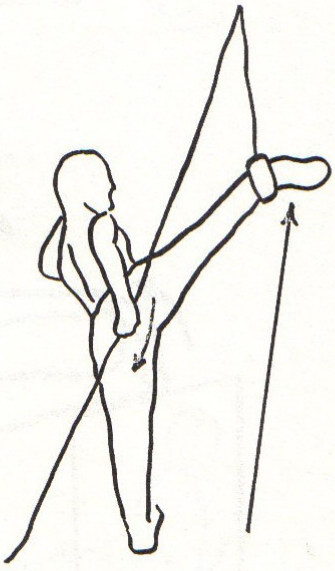


d) leg on bar; grasp bottom of foot with hand; exert pressure on leg by moving upper body forward (hold terminal position for 30 seconds)

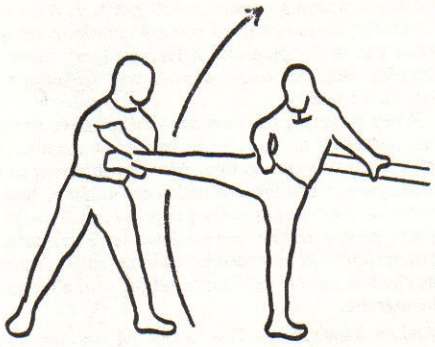
e) seated; legs together; grasp ankles; touch forehead to knees (hold for 30 sec.)

f) seated with legs spread; grasp ankles; bend forward from waist touching head to floor (hold for 30 sec.)

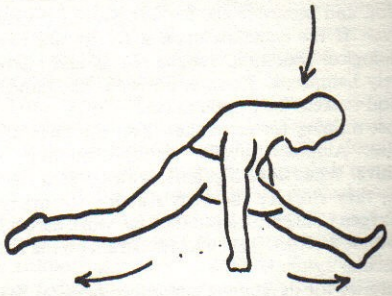
g) seated with legs spread; alternate touching head to knees (hold for 30 sec.)



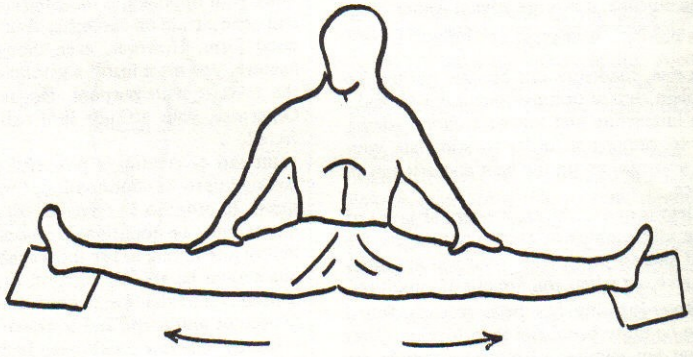
h) high side leg raise using pulley device (hold at maximum height for 30 sec.)



i) side leg raising with partner (hold at maximum height for 30 sec.)



j) side splits



k) full splits

ENDURANCE TRAINING

Endurance is a state or capability of lasting; a continuing or the power of continuing under pain or distress without being overcome. One's ability in all-out combat demands a degree of stamina necessary to outlast the opposition and persevere the furious pace of a struggle for survival. If the demands upon a fighter are beyond his physiological condition, fatigue sets in and his output is severely hampered. There is no room for fatigue in the physical makeup of a good athlete.

Most training for endurance takes the form of aerobic exercise. Aerobics involve rhythmic motion and are repetitive. When done regularly, with a gradual increase in effort, they enhance the body's ability to supply energy and oxygen to the muscles so they can work harder, longer, and with less effort. This puts less strain on the heart (cardiovascular system).

Exercises for developing endurance includes roadwork, rope-jumping, and shadow kickboxing.

Roadwork—The best single conditioner is roadwork. Not only does it build up the legs, but it increases the capacity of the lungs, and strengthens the heart. Through roadwork, the heart will be able to adjust to strenuous exertion, the lungs will be better able to supply more oxygen, and the legs will be better able to support the body in combat. Roadwork consists of running at different speeds and strides, usually interspersing sprints with easier jogging. Sprinting is vital and involves running a short distance at top speed. Roadwork is so important that it should be done faithfully. Just as the factors dictating the need for roadwork vary, so does the routine for roadwork. A good effort covers a distance of two to five miles, depending on an individual's condition. Running beyond this amount is unnecessary as long as you are going full-steam. Rather than increasing the mileage, it is more advantageous to increase the tempo. This allows more time to devote to other training exercises.

Like everything else, roadwork can become boring. To alleviate this problem, try to occupy your mind to make the running more interesting and less of a chore. Play a record just prior to running in order to stimulate your rhythm. Then, as you run, retain the beat and attempt to capture the cadence.

A good pair of legs is one of the most essential assets of a fighter. Walking and running at every opportunity are important for your success in combat. Your legs are often the first things to give out when you are out of condition.

Rope-Jumping—Rope-jumping has been recently found by physiologists to be more beneficial than jogging. They have estimated that ten minutes of jumping rope is the equivalent of a three-mile jog. Rope-jumping is great for developing speed and quick, light footwork. It helps coordinate the hands and arms with the feet. It keeps a fighter on the toes and balls of his feet which develops spring and snap essential to footwork. Rope-jumping is also an important conditioner for one's wind and general endurance due to the fact that the larger muscles of the body are called into action.

Like many other training activities, rope-jumping should be controlled by the clock. It should include varying speeds and different jumping patterns. Five 3-minute rounds with one-minute breaks are sufficient for this exercise. As your skill and dexterity become greater, a good task is to omit the rest priods and jump rope for ten to fifteen minutes nonstop. Another good effort is to try and make 150 jumps a minute or 450 jumps in three minutes. Counting the jumps gives you something to think about while you're jumping and helps you jump faster. Faster jumping increases one's stamina and forces the legs to move even faster.

When pursuing this exercise, try to move around. Do this purposely to make both legs work together as they must when you are fighting. Also, try different steps such as jumping on one foot, shuffling on both feet, and double passes of the rope for every jump. As in roadwork, intersperse pepper rhythm with milder tempo. Again, background music is an excellent training aid for stimulating the rhythm and taking your mind off of the monotony of the exercise.

Shadow Kickboxing—This is one of the best means of studying your mistakes. Shadow kickboxing limbers up the muscles as well as enhancing speed, endurance, and proper fighting form. It develops your attacks and defenses to meet all the different situations you might face. It is also very useful in stimulating creativity and imagination.

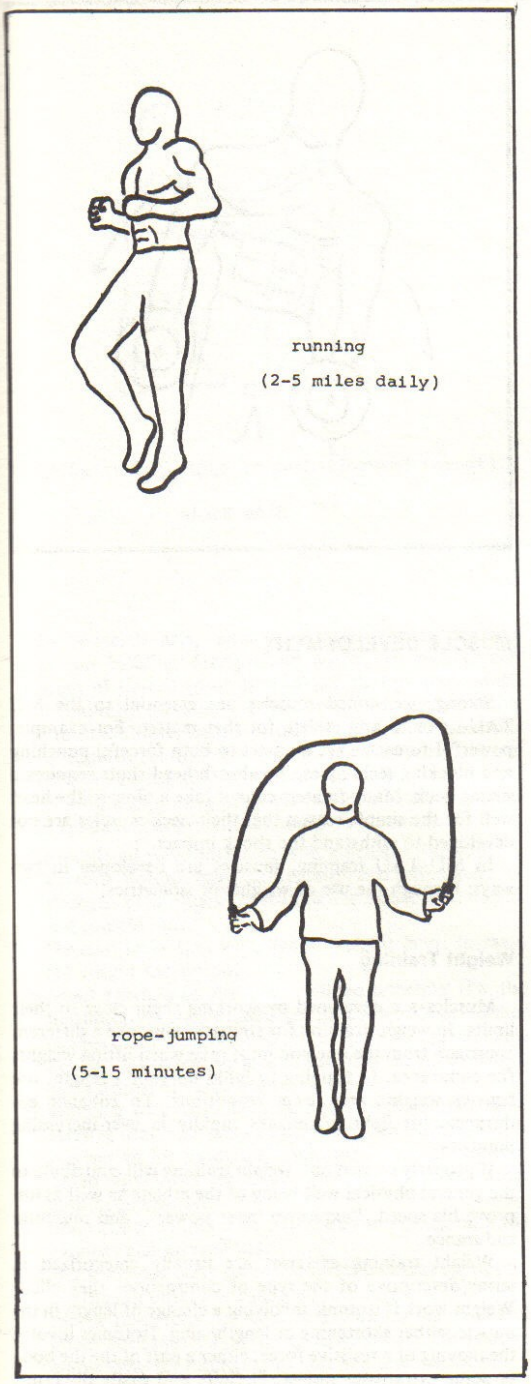
Usually in your workout you are making contact with something but in this self-imposed activity, all you are hitting is air. In an actual fight, you will find that there are many instances when you miss your opponent and hit nothing. Injury may result if you lack the knowledge of pulling your limbs back properly after a missed blow.

Another function of shadow kickboxing is that it allows you to practice and perfect various combat moves and combinations without the need of a live sparring partner. Since your opponent is imaginary, you can relax somewhat and concentrate on executing your kicks and punches with good form. However, even though the adversary is imaginary, you must instill a psychological hatred to provide the exercise with purpose. Hit as though you mean it!! Otherwise, your attitude in a real situation might be affected.

Instead of creating a powerful punch or kick, shadow boxing improves coordination, form, balance, agility, and speed. In order to be effective, all offensive and defensive moves must be coordinated smoothly and harmoniously. Before attempting to use them against an actual opponent, one should be able to perform them with proficiency by himself. As he shadow kickboxes, the movements gradually become automatic and instinctive.

Ideally, shadow kickboxing is best done in front of a full-length mirror. The fighter's own image is thereby used as the opponent or target. The mirror is helpful in revealing flaws in one's techniques. When a mirror is not available, the trainee can shadow-fight in the center of a room with the target being completely imaginary.

Shadow kickboxing should be done in three-minute rounds, with the usual one minute rest in between. It is worthwhile to include two rounds of this exercise in every workout. This will be an adequate amount of time to force



Endurance Exercises (aerobics)

the cardiovascular system to work hard, developing greater stamina.

In Greek martial art, shadow kickboxing is but a means to an end. In classical karate training, on the other hand, the kata or form practice is often the end itself. Unless the self-performed moves of shadow fighting are functional in all-out sparring or fighting, the practice is useless and of little value. In this art, shadow kickboxing is excellent homework for actual sparring.

MU TAU is devoid of preset forms. Its version of fighting without an antagonist is unplanned and spontaneous. Based on individual expression and freedom of movement, it encourages creativity rather than memorization, and smooth fluidity over strict mechanical precision.

Since it is common martial arts knowledge that proper form and technique precede power and speed, continued shadow kickboxing is a useful exercise. But the solo exercise is not fighting; a necessary adjunct of fighting to be sure, but ultimately we must come to duel with a live, uncooperative opponent. In short, the practice of fighting without fighting is a means to an end but not the end itself.

WAIST TRAINING

The waist is a bridge between the upper and lower body. It can be sturdy or flexible upon command by the body. When it is sturdy, it contibutes to one's balance and power. When it is flexible, the waist can assist you in weaving out of range from an attack as well as augmenting striking force due to the momentum gained while twisting.

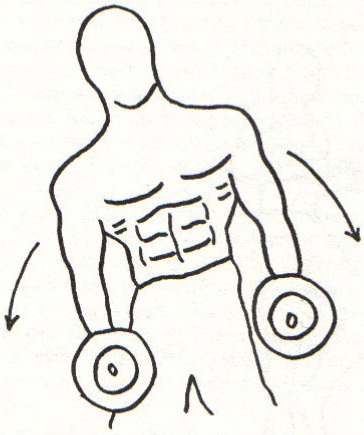
Abdominal exercises are a daily ritual as they develop flexibility in the waist to produce effective techniques, and condition the midsection to absorb blows to that area. Of all the muscle groups of the body, the abdominals are among the most important and should never be neglected by the martial artist in his training. A strong midsection is advised for all those interested in participating in full-contact sparring. It is the trademark of the well-disciplined athlete.

Situps and leg raises are the best exercises for the stomach. The situp, performed in a straight-forward motion or twist from side to side, develops the upper abdominals. Situps should be performed very slowly, the body descending slower than ascending. More benefit is gained by doing situps slowly as continuous tension is concentrated on the stomach muscles. The quality of the movement is more important than the quantity. In other words, it is not the number of repetitions that matters but the manner in which the exercise is done. The leg raise, performed in any of its variations, is designed to develop the lower abdominal muscles (rectus abdominis).

Some Exercises for the Waist are:

1) side bends (right, left)
2) waist twisting with weighted bar
3) situps on incline board or Roman Chair
4) leg raises
5) knee drawing to chest (variations)
6) medicine ball work

shadow-kickboxing in front of mirror
(2-3 minutes)



Side Bends

MUSCLE DEVELOPMENT

Strong, well-toned muscles are essential to the MU TAU-ist or to any athlete for that matter. For example, powerful forearms are an asset to both forceful punching and blocking techniques. To absorb head shots requires a strong neck. Many fighters cannot take a blow to the head well for the simple reason that their neck muscles are not developed to withstand the shock impact.

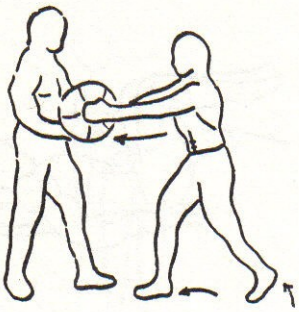
In MU TAU training, muscles are developed in two ways: through the use of weights or isometrics.

Weight Training

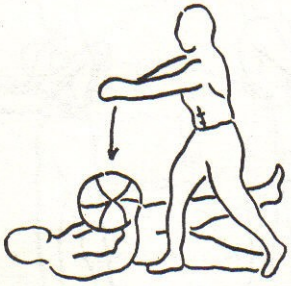
Muscles are developed by working them close to their limits. In weight training for strength, you take a different approach from the one you must take when lifting weights for endurance. In training to build up your strength, use heavier weights and fewer repetitions. To enhance endurance, lift light poundages rapidly in ever-increasing numbers.

If properly carried out, weight training will contribute to the general physical well-being of the athlete as well as improve his speed, "explosive inner power", and muscular endurance.

Weight training exercises are usually categorized in terms descriptive of the type of contractions they elicit. Weight work is isotonic involving a change of length in the muscle, either shortening or lengthening. Isotonics involve the moving of a resistive force, either a part of the the body or some extraneous object. Definite and easily discerned movement takes place.



Medicine ball into stomach (forward thrust)

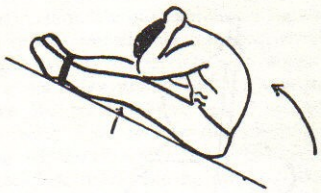


Medicine ball into stomach (overhead drop)

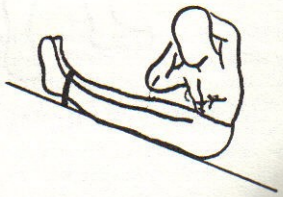
In the martial arts, one must be certain that for the time spent on building strength and power, an even greater amount of time is spent on exercises that promote speed and flexibility. Naturally, if done correctly, weight training will most definitely benefit speed. Weight training is merely a supplement to your regular exercise program and should not be considered a substitute for it.

In a weight training program for the martial artist certain fundamental principles should be observed:

a) Precede all weight training with a general warmup
b) Perform isotonic movements slowly and deliberately for strength or in quick repetitions for speed, endurance, and muscle tone.
c) Develop form first with lighter weight; later, increase the weight and output.
d) Select a weight so that the 'overload principle' (i.e. the maximum resistance that is attained when the performer can make no more than 10 to 15 reps with a given load) applies. When you are able to complete the final set with some degree of ease, add more weight.
e) Working with extreme weight for the development of massive muscular size and bulk is not recommended. It is wiser to lift moderate poundages in strict, concentrated reps. Work for muscle tone and definition rather than huge muscles.
f) Maintain good muscular balance by exercising both the agonists and antagonists.
g) Work various body parts and specific muscle groups on alternating days. For example, concentrate on the arms two or three days per week and work on the chest and upper back muscles on the in-between days. This allows ample time for reduction of soreness and stiffness.
h) Apply proper breathing: inhale as you start the move-

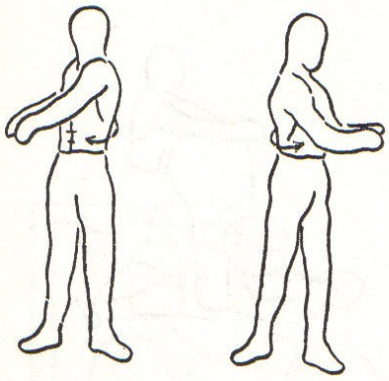


Incline Situp (straight forward)

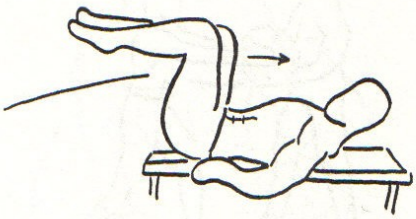


Incline Twisting Situp

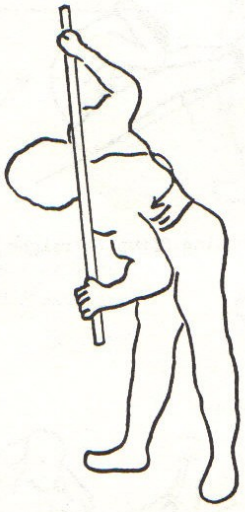
Waist Training



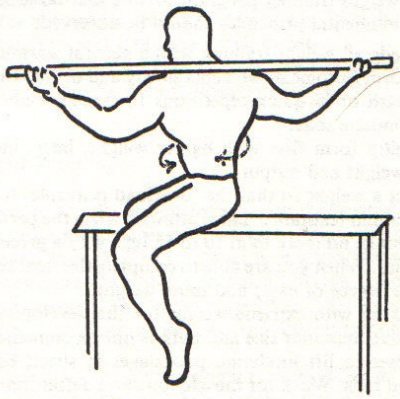
Waist Twisting



Leg Raise (knee drawing to chest)



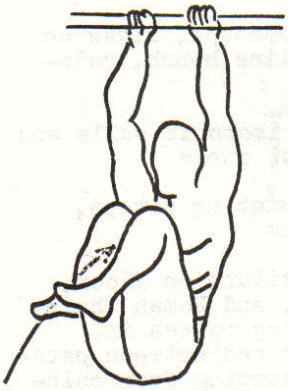
Twists with weighted bar



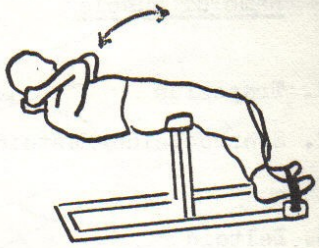
twists with weighted bar while seated

Waist Training

side bends (without weights)



hanging knees-to-abdomen raise (for the two lower layers of abdominals)



Roman Chair situp

ment and exhale during the execution of each movement. Breathe out as soon as there is any strain on the body.

i) Rest 30-45 seconds between sets. The only way to achieve muscular growth is to move from one set to the next at a fast pace.

In my own personal training program, weight-lifting is not considered of prime importance but is a supplement to my regular workout. I merely use weights to develop power in the major muscle groups applied in fighting in order to perform specific movements more proficiently. I am very selective, however, in exercises with weights, fashioning them to avoid bulky muscles that might impede speed and flexibility. Besides the abdominals, I concentrate heavily on the forearms since these are the muscles depended on in punching. My drills include the reverse curl and palm-up curl with 75 pounds, utilizing a special bent bar which places greater tension on the wrists and forearms. Other excellent exercises for the forearms are leverage bar rotations, the wrist roller, and squeezing a rubber ball or a set of vise grips.

I might occasionally lift weights for building up the minor areas, such as the back, chest, and shoulders, but this additional training is done on a limited basis.

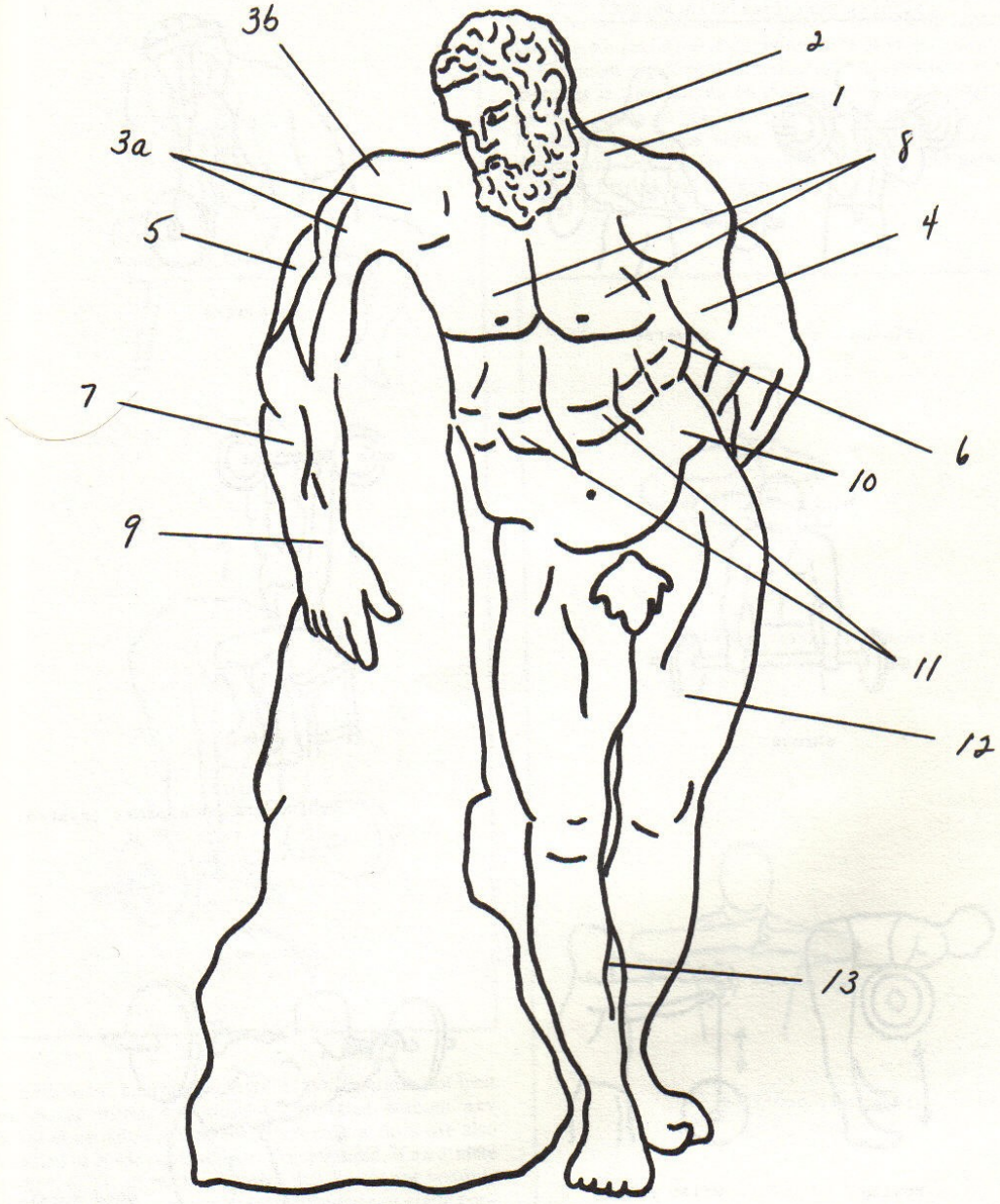
Isometrics

The resistance to produce an overload can be introduced in a variety of ways. Weight training utilizes weights as a resistive force to overload the muscles. Calisthenics designed to develop strength employ the weight of the body as the resistance for overload. Isometric exercises make use of the resistance offered by a relatively immovable object to bring about an overload. Hence, each of these three developmental techniques is similar in that each uses resistance to overload the musculature.

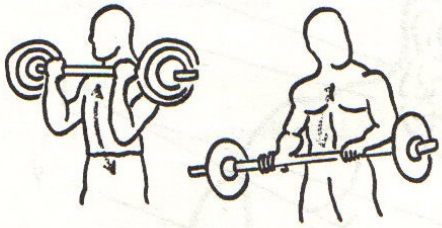
Physiologists have found that isometrics achieve maximum muscle development more rapidly than conventional exercises which, because they require many repetitions, take much longer.

Muscle Chart

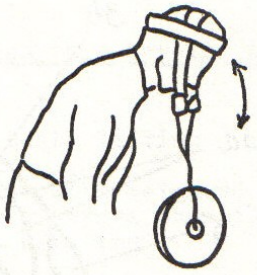
Name of Muscle	Activities that develop the Muscle
1. Trapezius	Shrugs, teeth lifting
2. Sternocleido-Mastoid	Neck lifts with weighted head-strap, resistance exercise with partner, bridging
3. Deltoid a) anterior b) lateral	Overhead lifting, standing and seated behind-the-neck press, lateral raise with dumbells
4. Biceps	Single and two-hand curling (palms up), chinning, isometrics
5. Triceps	Dips, bench press, all forms of pushups, close-grip pulldowns
6. Latissimus Dorsi	All types of bent-over rowing, wide-grip chins behind neck, wide-grip pulldowns
7. Brachialis Anticus	Reverse curl, leverage bar twist, wrist roller, isometrics
8. Pectorals	Bench press, pushups, flyes on supine or decline bench, palm-pressing
9. Ligament of Wrist	Isometric and isotonic pulls and supports, wrist curls
10. External Oblique	Side bends, twisting situps, waist rotations
11. Rectus Abdominis	All types of situps on floor, incline board, and Roman Chair. All forms of leg raises in lying position and between parallel bars or hanging from chinning bar. Also, all bending and twisting movements.
12. Rectus Femoris	Knee bends, jumping squats
13. Gastrocnemius	Heel raises on platform, running and sprinting, rope-jumping


3b
2
1
3a
8
5
4
7
6
10
9
11
12
13

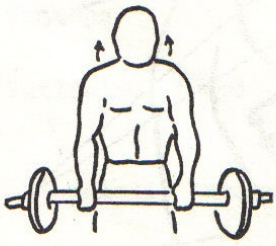
Special Exercises with Weights



palm-up curl reverse curl

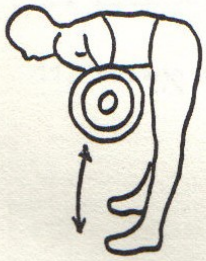


necklifts



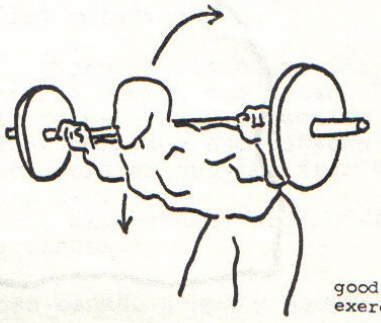
shrugs

behind-the-neck press (seated)



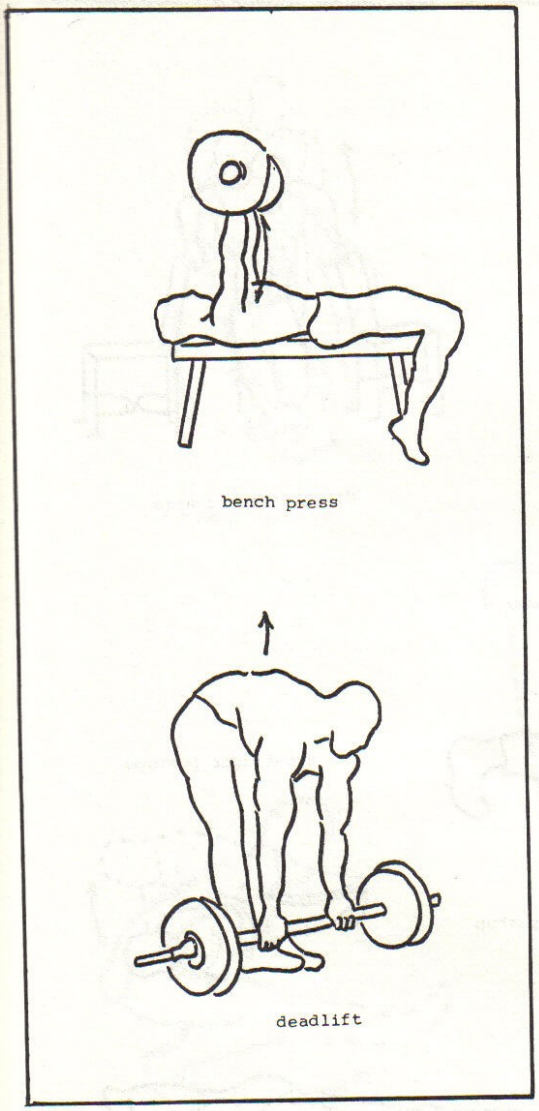
rowing

wrist roller



good morning exercise

STRENGTH TRAINING (Upper Body)



bench press

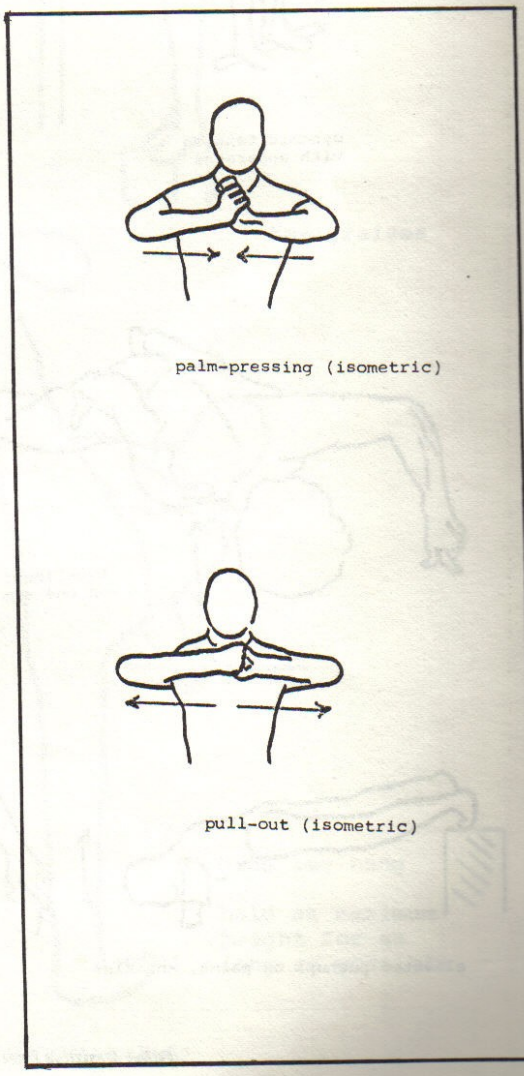
deadlift

An isometric contraction involves the generation of heat and energy within the muscles implicated without any readily discernable movement. Such contractions are also identified as static contractions. For example, if an athlete attempts to lift or push an object that he cannot possibly move, his muscles are in a state of isometric or static contraction. He would be exerting tremendous muscular force but exhibiting no actual movement of the muscles entailed or of the object he was attempting to move.

The development of muscular strength thorough isometrics advantageously utilizes a minimum of equipment and a minimum amount of time. The duration of isometric contractions should not exceed seven seconds. It is also advisable to hold this contraction in a given position not more than once daily.

The intensity of isometrics should be a sudden and constant burst of maximum energy and strength throughout. Full force is preferred to applying force of varying degrees.

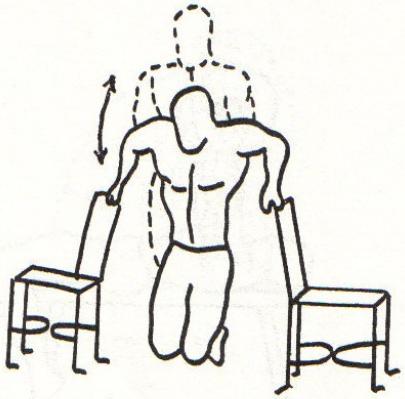
The most significant contribution of dynamic tension exercises is their ability to develop muscular strength at specific points in the range of motion around a joint. However, isometrics alone without complementary activities will do little for muscular endurance and may actually be detrimental to flexibility.



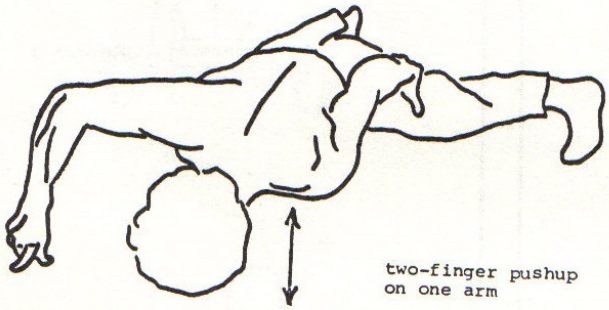
palm-pressing (isometric)

pull-out (isometric)

dynamic tension
with apparatus

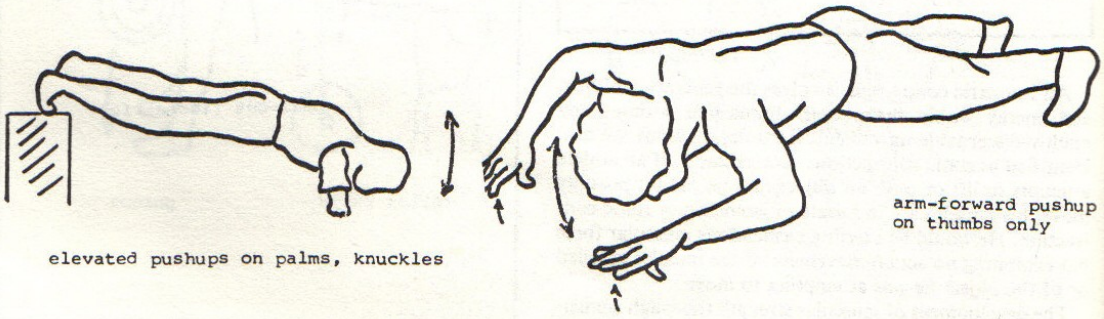


dips between chairs



two-finger pushup
on one arm

two-finger pushups

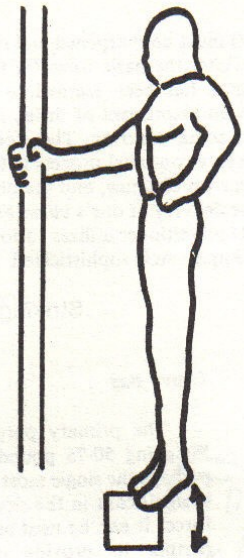


elevated pushups on palms, knuckles

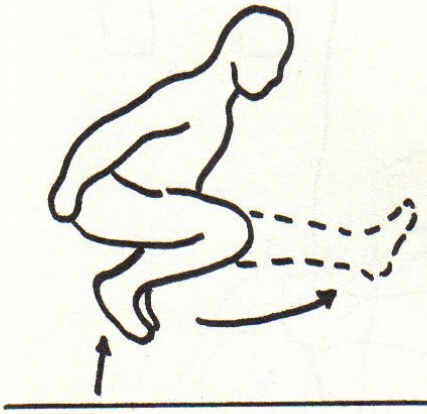
arm-forward pushup
on thumbs only

Other Resistive Exercises (without weights)

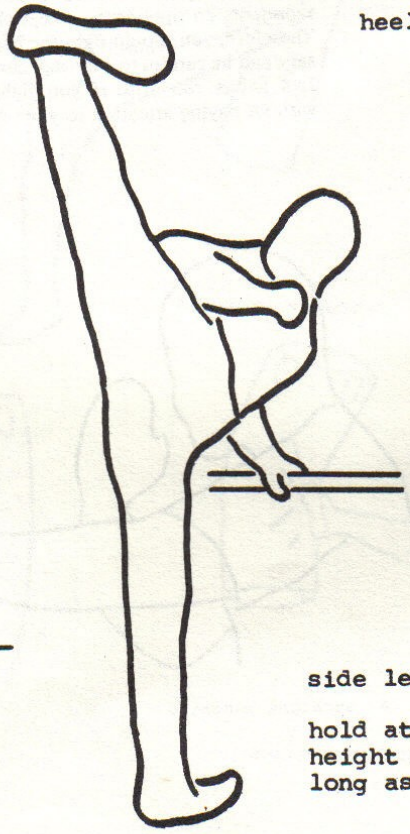
knee bends



heel raises



jumping squats



side leg hang

hold at maximum height for as long as possible

STRENGTH TRAINING (Lower Body)

SHARPENING THE TOOLS

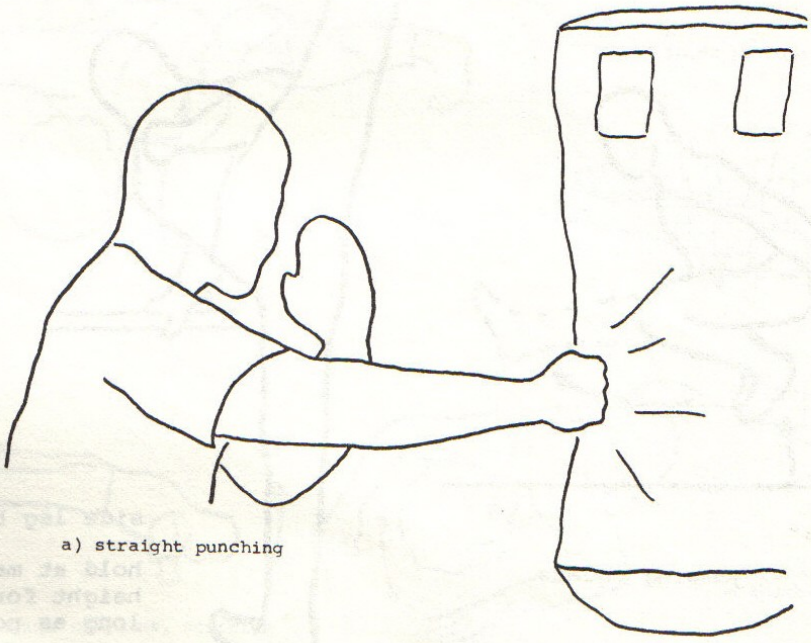
The 'tools' (hands and feet) must be sharpened and improved daily to be efficient. After the basic form for the striking and kicking techniques has been learned, it is essential to practice, through an assortment of drills, the fundamentals that lead up to actual sparring. Therefore, sharpening the tools is a necessary continual process in the acquisition of exact timing, correct distance, and the proper "feeling" of contact in the delivery of one's blows and kicks. To do this the MU TAU practitioner utilizes various training equipment, both simple and sophisticated in design, which are adapted from different sports. Since hitting force cannot be adequately measured or developed by flailing the air, the use of these striking devices as instructional aids best acquaints one with his actual hitting skill. When a live sparmate is not available, working on bags filled with air, beans, or sand is the logical alternative for keeping the tools sharp.

The hitting and kicking aids used in MU TAU include the heavy bag, the man dummy, two types of speed bags, the focuser pad, the air shield, the paper target, the arm pad, the portable striking dummy, the wall sack, the leg shield, and wrist and ankle weights.

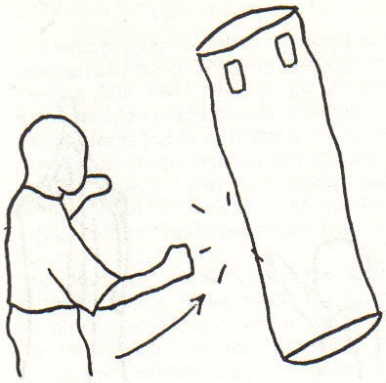
Striking and Kicking Aids

Heavy Bag

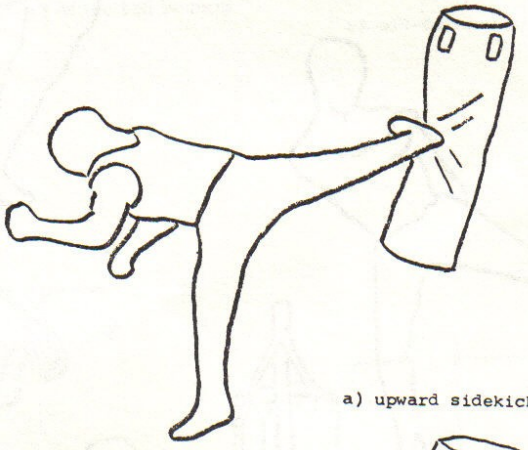
The primary purpose of the heavy bag is power. Weighing 50-75 pounds, this hitting and kicking aid is perhaps the single most important piece of equipment, and is significant in the development of distance and striking force. It can be used as a free-swinging unit or held by a partner to provide extra resistance. Either way, it represents an opponent—except that it doesn't hit back. Therefore, you should fight the bag as if it is a real adversary and be careful to stay-well covered when attacking it. Bad habits can arise if you fight the bag wrecklessly, without paying attention to your defensive cover.



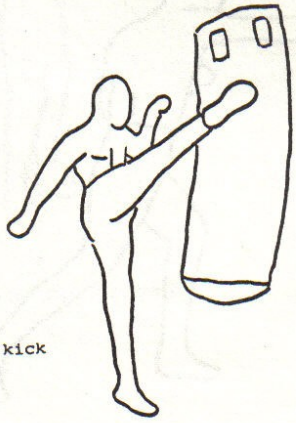
Punching the heavy bag



b) uppercut



a) upward sidekick



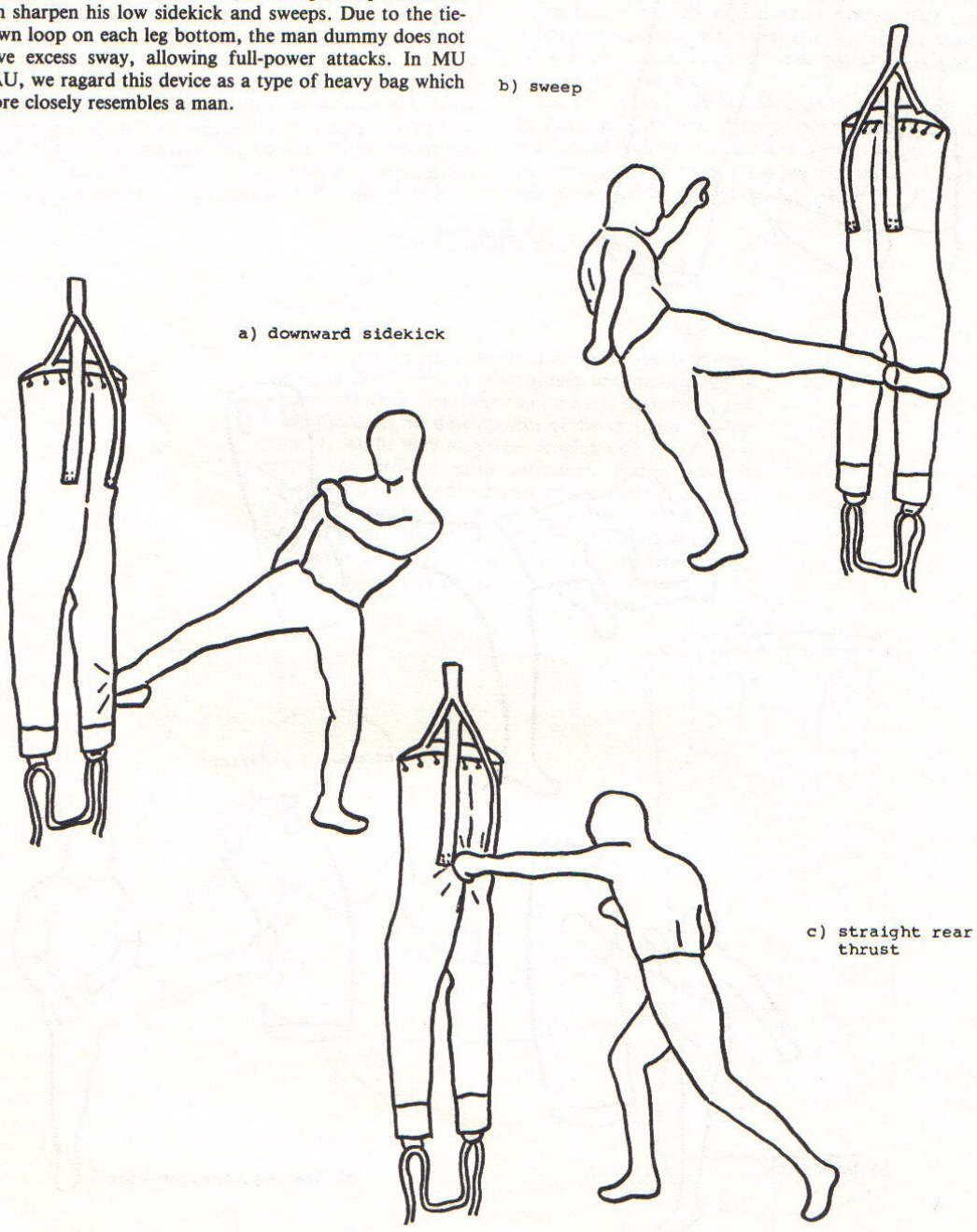
b) hook kick

c) leading straight kick

Kicking the heavy bag

Man Dummy

This unique piece of equipment lends realism to practicing punches and kicks. Since it has legs, the practitioner can sharpen his low sidekick and sweeps. Due to the tie-down loop on each leg bottom, the man dummy does not have excess sway, allowing full-power attacks. In MU TAU, we ragard this device as a type of heavy bag which more closely resembles a man.



b) sweep

a) downward sidekick

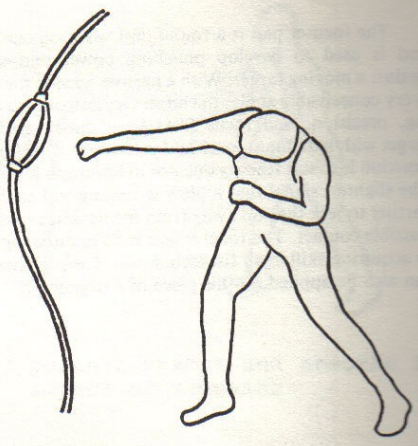
c) straight rear thrust

Speed Bag

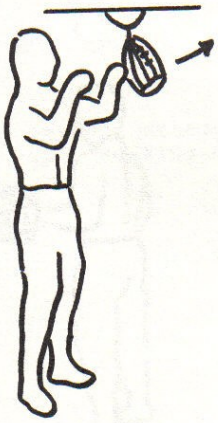
The basic purpose of working out with the speed bag is to develop hand speed. There are two types of speed bags employed in MU TAU training: the modern platform model and the old-fashion double cable ball.

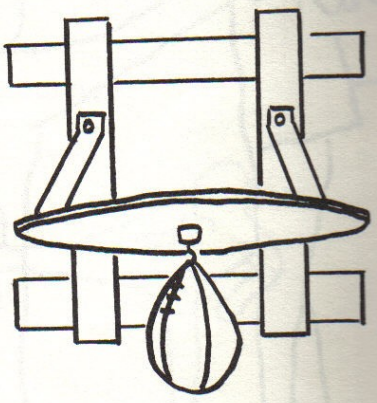
The platform bag is a rhythmic timing device which improves eye/hand coordination and strengthens the arm and shoulder muscles. Since this activity utilizes all the skeletal muscles of the body, it is an excellent means of enhancing the fitness of the respiratory and cardiovascular systems.

The old-fashion speed bag, on the other hand, is a non-rhythmic timing device supported by two springy rubber cables attached to the ceiling and floor. It teaches you to hit straight and square while simultaneously developing quick reflexes. Due to the unpredictable return of the ball when struck, you are constantly alert and forced to recover quickly. If it is not hit straight, the ball will not return directly to you. Defensive evasions, particularly head slipping, can also be practiced as the ball bounces back at you.



b) old-fashion speed bag

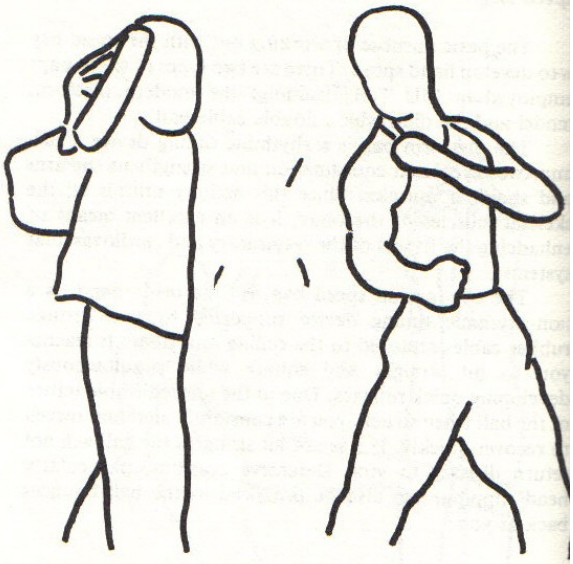




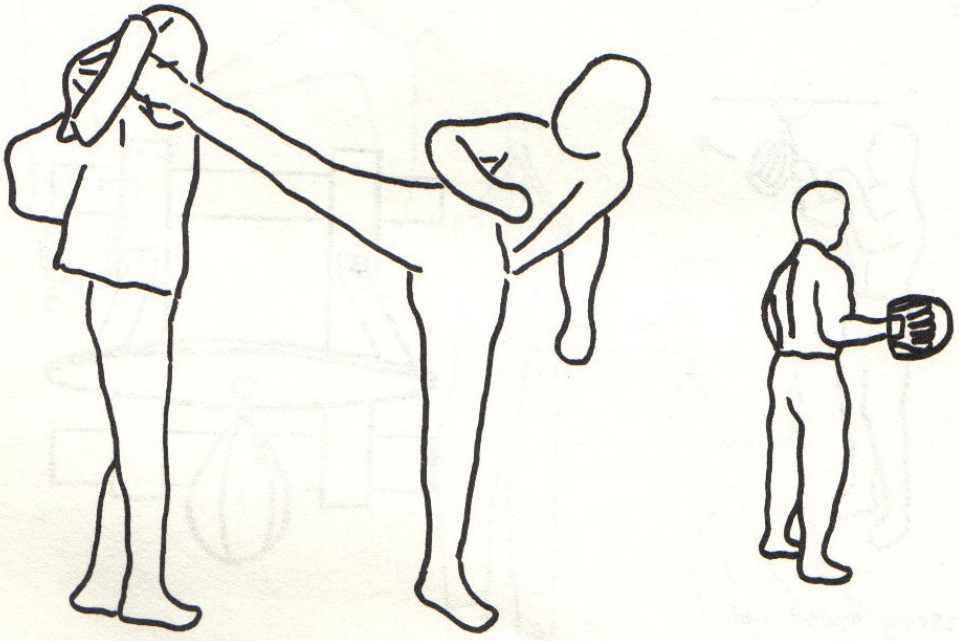
a) platform speed bag

Focuser Pad

The focuser pad is a round mitt worn on one's hand, and is used to develop punching power and accuracy against a moving target. With a partner waving the glove at every conceivable angle, the hitter can sharpen his distancing, precision, and focus (that is, a punch arriving on target with maximum force and extension). One important function is that it teaches one not to telegraph his punches. The slightest signal that a blow is coming will enable your partner to jerk the pad away from the punch, avoiding any possible contact. The focuser pad is an essential apparatus to acquiring skill in all fist techniques. The high hook kick can also be applied on this piece of equipment.



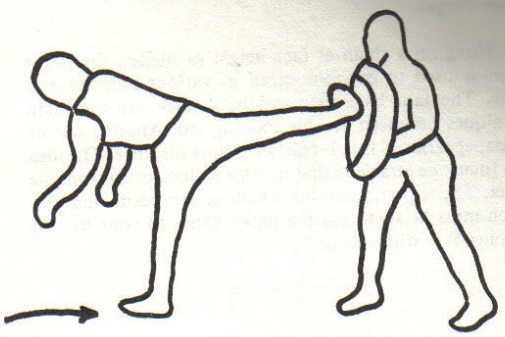
a) punching the focuser pad



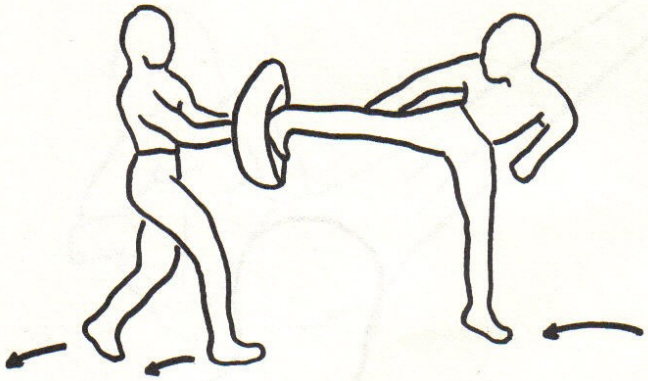
b) hook kick on focuser pad

Air Shield

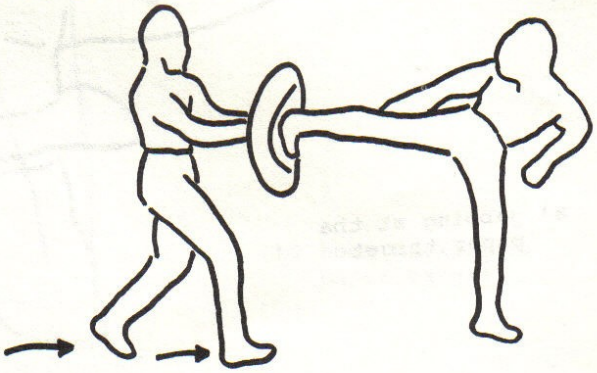
The air shield is another useful device, maximizing the penetrating power of the upward sidekick. It also teaches proper distance and timing. Due to its unique construction, the air shield can absorb a great deal of force, and the kicker is therefore encouraged to let loose with all the force he can generate. To improve penetration, the holder braces himself and receives the full impact of the kick; to sharpen timing and inward motion speed, the holder will attempt to back away quickly at the moment he senses the oncoming attack. This latter drill is also effective in teaching one not to telegraph his kick.



a) partner braces and absorbs full impact of sidekick



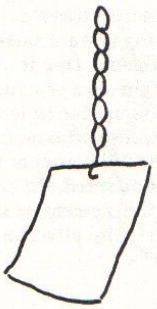
b) partner attempts to back away quickly upon sensing oncoming kick

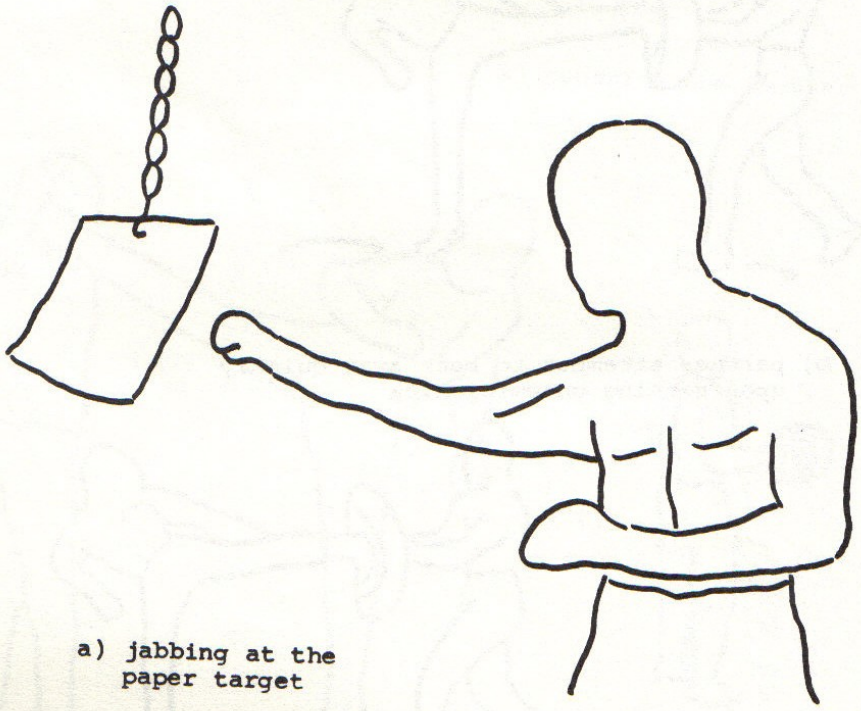


c) partner lunges forward and is intercepted by stop-sidekick

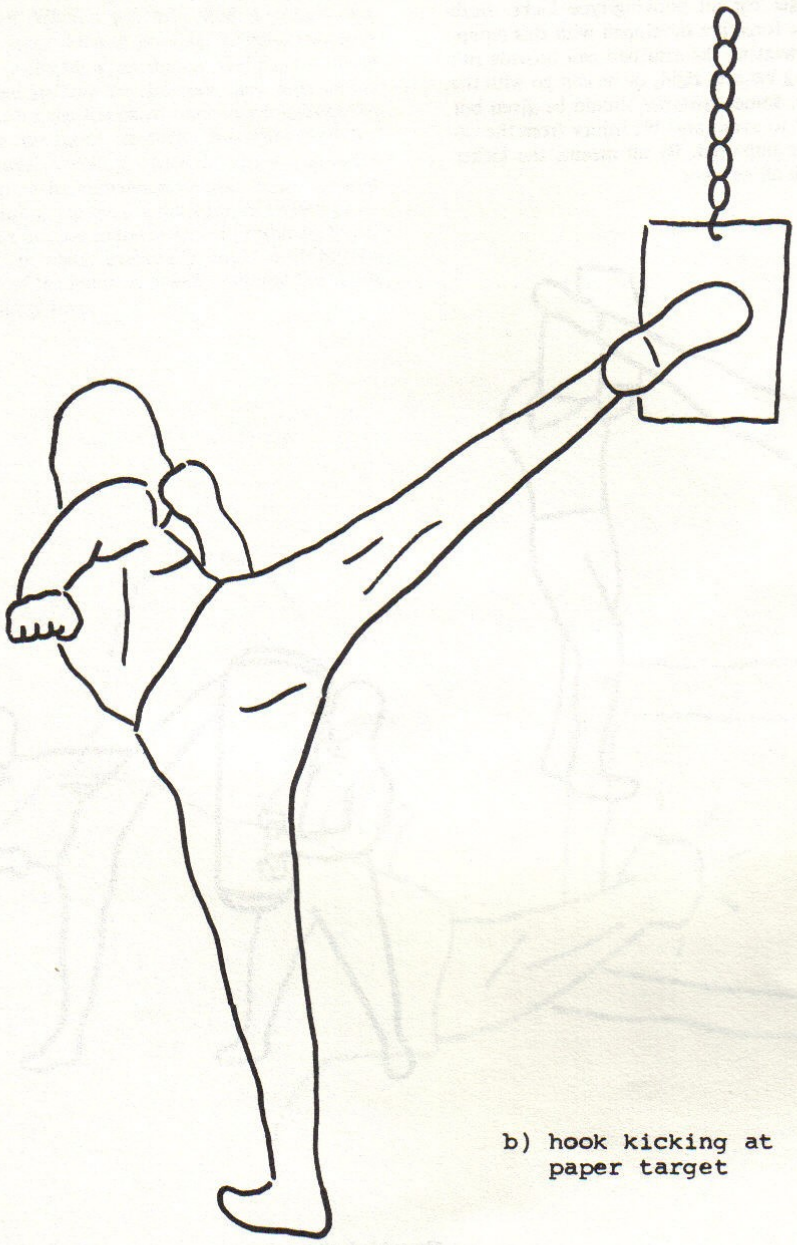
Paper Target

Hung on a chain at face height or higher, the paper target is used to enhance speed in various punches and kicks. The jab, back-fist, and hook kick are the main techniques practiced on this training aid. Another use of the paper target is that it teaches proper distance. The idea is to focus the attack so that it stops an inch or so from the target. The leg retraction of a kick or arm retraction of a punch must be such that the paper clings to your foot or fist once it is withdrawn.





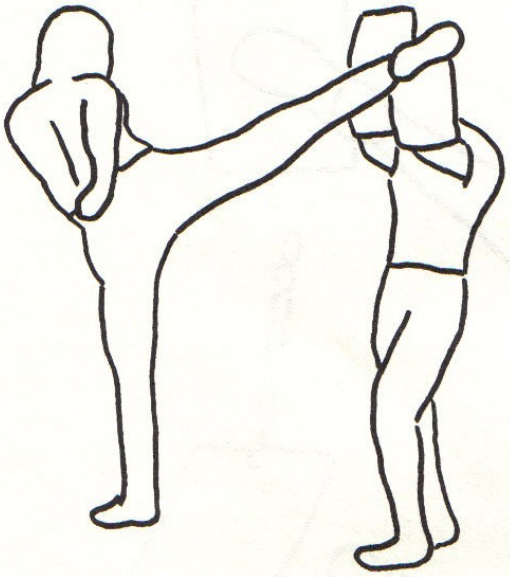
a) jabbing at the paper target

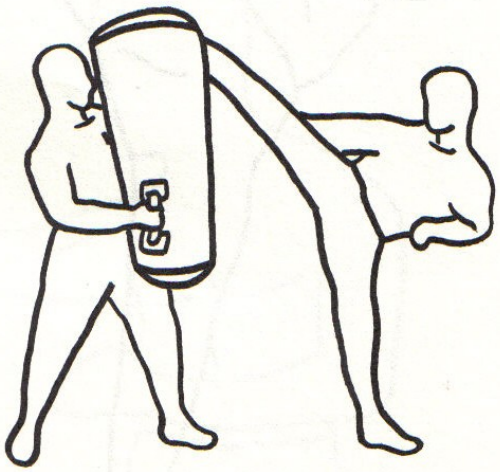


b) hook kicking at paper target

Arm Pad

The arm pad is a padded device worn on one's arm and used as a target for all hooking-type kicks. Both distance and impact force are developed with this equipment. The partner wearing the arm pad can provide full resistance by keeping his arm rigid, or he can go with the blow. In both cases, some resistance should be given but with enough "give" to avoid possible injury from the excessive kicking force imparted. By all means, the kicker should let loose with all he's got.



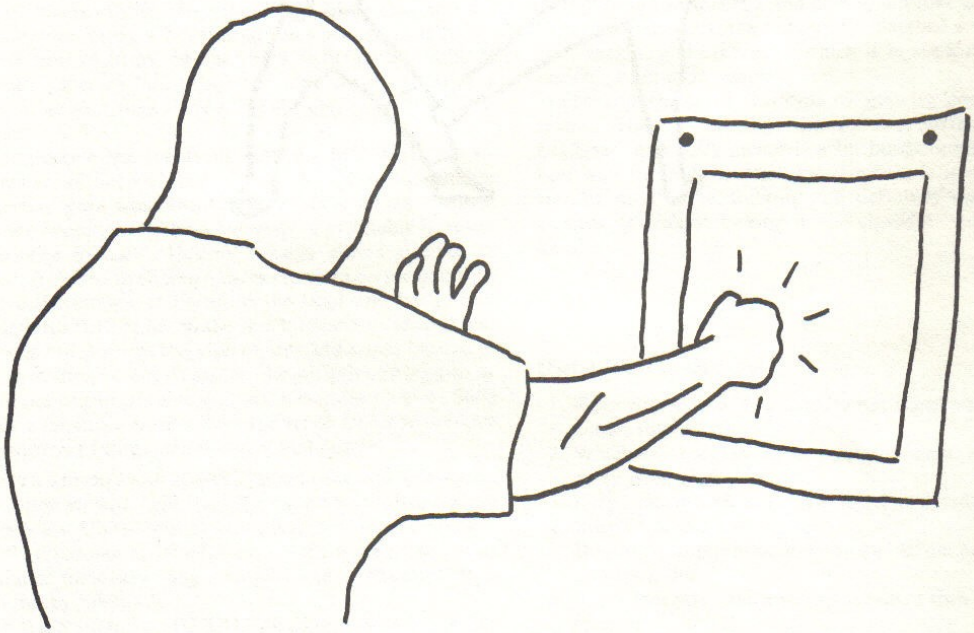


Portable Striking Dummy

The portable striking dummy is a light cylinder-shaped bag that is held by a partner who moves about rapidly, offering a moving target. Both kicks and punches can be applied on this apparatus.

Wall Sack

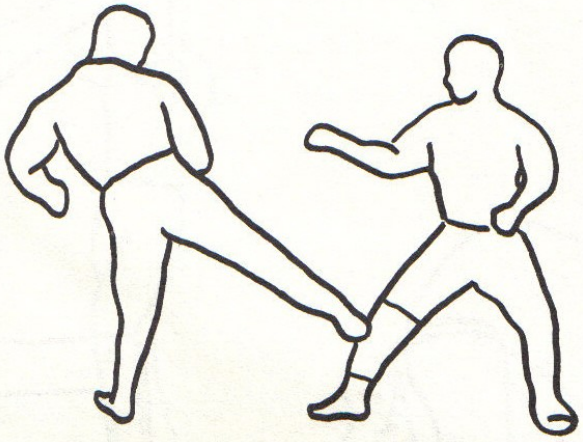
The wall sack is a square bag filled with beans mounted on a wall. When struck with either a straight rear thrust or driving vertical fist, it provides a feeling of depth and penetration in the blow, as though you have actually hit someone. The striking of the wall sack also builds strong wrists and hands. Repeated punching toughens the knuckles of the fist and, as such, is responsible for developing a powerful wallop. Since the fist is a primary weapon, developing its resistance to pain is a common practice. Toughening the fist is a must for all serious practitioners of the art but not to the extent of producing large, protruding calluses which eventually might prohibit the normal function of the hand. A heavily callused fist is not the secret to striking force.



punching the wall sack

Leg Shield

The leg shield is actually a fiberglass protector that covers the shin and knee. It is quite similar to that worn in hockey. The main function of this piece of equipment is to develop the speed and accuracy of the downward sidekick against a moving target. A partner, wearing the leg shield, will attempt to use all methods of evasive footwork to avoid being hit by the kick.



Wrist and Ankle Weights

These are simply weights of two pounds each that are worn on one's wrists and ankles either during shadow kickboxing or when striking the bags. After several repetitions of hitting and kicking with the weights on, they should be removed, then followed by another series of blows and kicks. The result of this drill is an increase in speed of hand and foot.

SPARRING

In MU TAU, sparring is regarded as being the ultimate learning experience and the best preparation for actual combat. All of the other training is but a means to this. There is no better way to test your skills than sparring with a live opponent. The practitioner uses sparring as a testing ground for his techniques as well as his endurance and courage. He experiments with various moves and discovers which are most effective for him. Sparring provides the practitioner with general fighting experience while stimulating actual combat conditions as closely as possible.

Sparring differs from street-fighting in that it is not an all-out fight to the finish. The aim is not to maim or disable your opponent but to practice the various skills and to attain fighting pitch. It sharpens reflexes, improves your ability to judge distance, and develops split-second timing so that you can defend yourself effectively in a serious encounter.

By sparring, you learn to cope with different fighting styles and tactics. Some opponents rush in, others try to tempt you into leading; some fight persistently from a distance, others want to draw you into infighting. A seasoned street-fighter often makes a formidable adversary since he is apt to present the martial artist with unfamiliar moves and confusing situations. It is often wise to spar against those who are better than you since one usually improves most when competing with a higher level of skill. It is much better to find your errors and correct them in a sparring session than during a real fight, when it may be too late.

To perceive the reality of combat, MU TAU practitioners go all out with full-contact while wearing suitable protective gear from head to shin. This allows realistic fighting conditions without injuries—a profitable learning experience in itself. Heavily padded gloves ranging in weight from ten to sixteen ounces are worn on the hands to reduce the impact of blows to the head and body. Full headguards further lessen the shock impact of head shots. Body armor protects the vital organs and bones located in the midsection. A cup to protect the genitals and leg guards made out of fiberglass complete the mandatory gear. Such safety equipment enables each fighter to let loose in order to realize his full potential and actual power.

One's objectives in sparring should include scoring on the opponent with skill and efficiency without being hit in the process. Unlike tournament play, there is no "winner/loser" syndrome involved. Instead, the sparring serves as an outlet for discovering strengths and weaknesses. It is learning by "doing".

To the unitiated a MU TAU sparring session looks like an anything-goes free-for-all. A sharp observer notices it is mostly boxing with some kicking and grappling. Hard knockdowns are frequent and bodies are literally sent flying through the air from the force of clean-scoring sidekicks. Yet the action of a match is governed by a set of rules mutually agreed upon by the fighters and a code of ethics that all MU-TAU-ists abide by. During a friendly bout any of the padded parts of the body may be attacked. Prohibitions include head-buitting, striking the groin, biting, gouging the eyes, and attacking the back. No hard contact with the more dangerous blows such as elbow and knee smashes, and thrusting kicks to the kneejoint is allowed. Attacking an opponent who has been downed by a sweep or tackle is within the rules; however, hitting or kicking an opponent who has been knocked to the ground by a solid blow or kick is forbidden.

MU TAU sparring is practiced most anywhere, inside the gym or out on open ground. The fighting area varies in size, ranging from a boundless field to the tight quarters of a small room.

In early times, there were no "rounds". The battle continued uninterrupted, ending only when a competitor surrendered, was knocked unconscious, or was killed. In comparison, MU TAU continues to maintain the nonstop action. A private match has no definite time limit, the fighters often sparring for thirty to forty-five minutes with intermittent breaks. In the case of promotionals to higher rank, a bout is usually ten minutes in duration without a break. This type of sparring is supervised by a qualified instructor in the fighting area who acts as referee, and two or three side judges of seventh rank or higher who tally comments on a score card. Points are given for form, strategy, courage, aggressiveness, and those blows that score effectively. The student is then informed of his particular strengths and weaknesses and how to improve upon these.

For the most part, the fighters are matched according to size, weight, and experience which is in stark contrast to ancient pankration contests.

The importance of this type of sparring goes without saying. Though sparring with pillowy gloves, military headgear, and body armor is a bit burdensome, it is the best way to ready oneself for combat. It is the closest simulation of street-fighting and definitely contains the element of realism lacking in the classical "no-contact" karate.

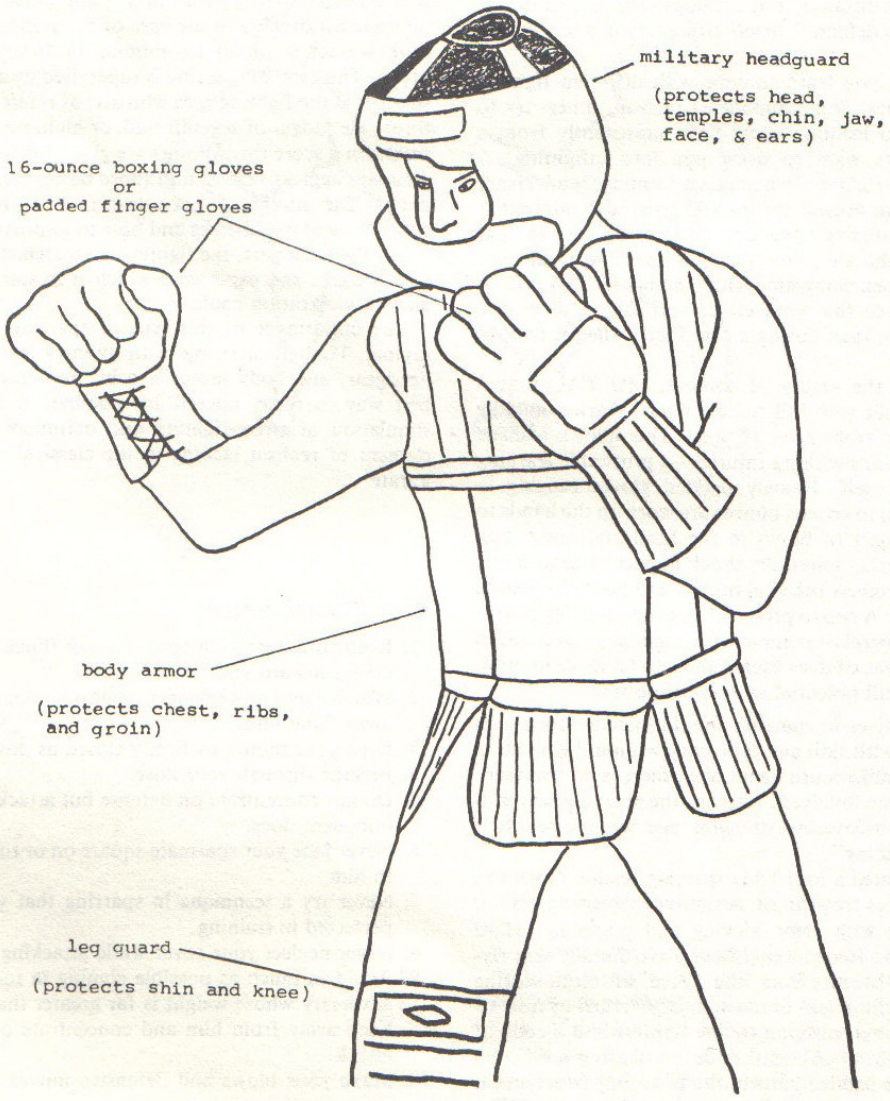
Useful Hints in Sparring

1. Keep your eyes wide open. Do not flinch when a blow comes toward you.
2. Watch every movement of your opponent. Never look away from him.
3. Keep your mouth as firmly closed as possible.
4. Breathe through your nose.
5. Do not concentrate on defense but attack before your opponent does.
6. Never face your sparmate square on or turn your back to him.
7. Never try a technique in sparring that you have not perfected in training.
8. Never neglect your cover while attacking.
9. Avoid as much as possible coming in too close to an adversary whose weight is far greater than your own. Keep away from him and concentrate on long-range attack.
10. Make your blows and defensive moves a surprise to your opponent.

11. Do not hit just anywhere but focus your attack on vital points.
12. If your sparring partner is taller than you, concentrate on infighting.
13. Always take advantage of your opponent's mistakes and weaknesses while avoiding his strengths.
14. Never lose your temper. Keep calm and cool so you can take immediate advantage of openings.
15. Never show when you are hurt; try to regain your senses by tying up the opponent in a clinch.
16. Remember that a light attack on target is better than a heavy one missed.
17. Never charge in recklessly to attempt a takedown or grappling technique, or you may be hit in the process.
18. Take your sparring seriously. Think of it as a street-fight with protective equipment.
19. Exhale strongly when delivering a blow or kick. The exhalation may be in the form of an "eesh"—sounding hiss or yell, which also acts to disorganize the opponent.
20. Never feel superior or over-confident. Respect your sparring partner but also believe that you can win, whatever his reputation.

MU TAU SPARRING

mandatory protective gear



Rules for Competitive Sparring

Originally, Greek pankration was a brutal contact combative sport with very few rules. The development of MU TAU brought about necessary changes in the ancient art, resulting in a more humane and modernized version. New rules and regulations were established, producing greater uniformity among the various academies and adding safeguards to protect the competitors from serious injury.

By the late 1970's, the following ten rules were introduced and adopted by the MU TAU organization.

1. Class Divisions

Competitors must be matched according to experience. Three classes of competition are recognized. They are:

a) Novice Division (less than 1 year of training experience)
b) Intermediate Division (1-2 years of training)
c) Advanced Division (3 or more years of training)

2. Weight Divisions

Competitors must also be matched according to weight. Six categories exist:

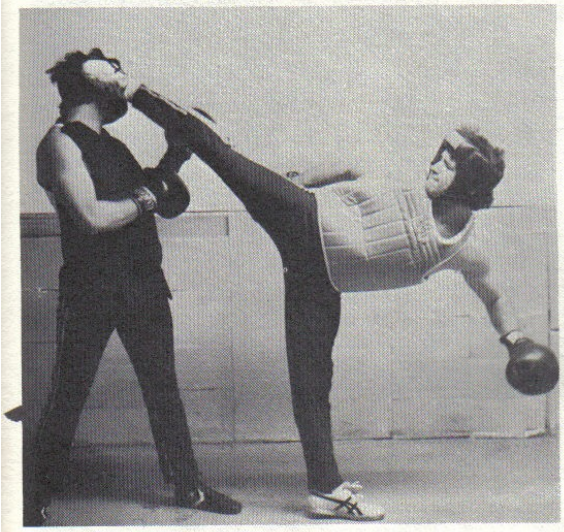
a) 170 pounds - above
b) 160 - 169 pounds
c) 150 - 159 pounds
d) 140 - 149 pounds
e) 130 - 139 pounds
f) 120 - 129 pounds

3. Fighting Area

Size of a standard boxing ring (18 feet by 18 feet). Boundaries must be appropriately marked or roped off.

4. Equipment

All Mu Tau-ists must be equipped with the following items in competitive bouts:



a) Mouthpiece
b) Groin cup & supporter
c) 12 - 16 ounce boxing gloves
d) Lightweight footwear (sneakers, track shoes, etc.)
e) Military headguard
f) Shirt and pants

5. Judges/Officials

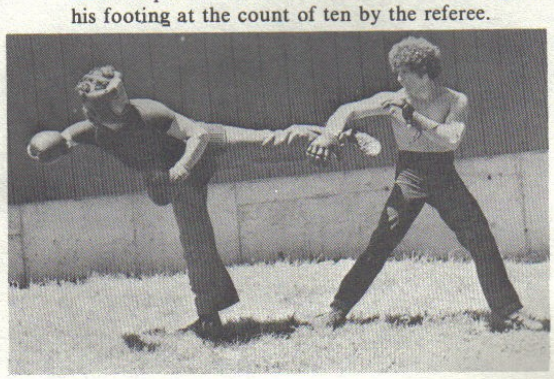
a) Three (3) assigned judges will evaluate the matches.
b) One referee to regulate the fighters. He has the sole right to stop a match upon his discretion.
c) One official time-keeper to regulate the beginning and end of the rounds.

6. Duration of Bouts

Five (5) 3-minute rounds with one-minute breaks (rest periods) between rounds constitute a bout.

7. Determination of the Winner

a) A fighter can win by K.O. (knockout) if the opponent has been floored by a blow or kick or series of punches and kicks and is unable to regain his footing at the count of ten by the referee.



b) A fighter can win by K.O. after the opponent has been floored *twice* within one round.

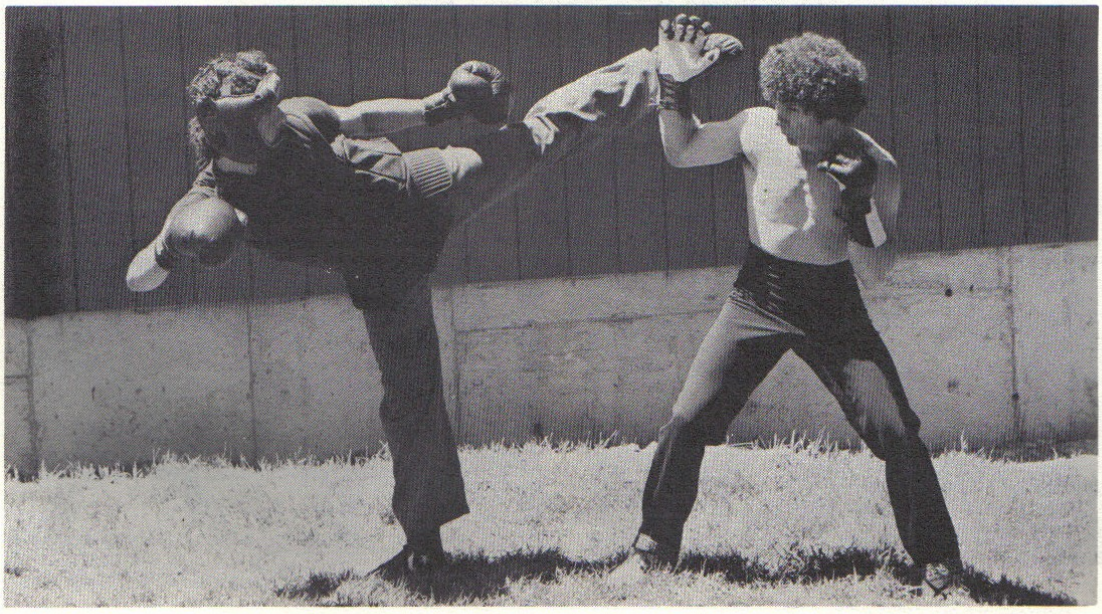
c) A fighter can win by submission if the opponent signals defeat from the incapability of escaping a hold or lock about the neck or limbs.

d) A fighter can win by T.K.O. (Technical Knock-Out) if the referee stops the bout due to cuts or injuries; or if the opponent refuses to answer the bell for any given round; or if the opponent is still on his feet but helpless to defend himself adequately.

e) A fighter can win the bout by receiving the greatest accumulation of points awarded by the judges. 10-point must system is used. The winner of the round must be given ten ponts while the loser will get 5-9 points. Judging is based upon the following major criteria:

1/ Offensive and defensive skills of the fighter
2/ Strategy
3/ Aggressiveness and attitude
4/ Physical fitness and condition
5/ Effectiveness of blows (clean, accurate, powerful, etc.)

f) A fighter can win by foul if the opponent employs illegal techniques or strikes at an illegal target.



8. Legal Techniques

The following techniques are permitted in Mu Tau competitive bouts:

a) Any available punching and striking blows with gloved hands to any padded area of the body and head.

b) Any available kicking techniques to any padded area of the body and head.

c) Any available knee techniques to the body (not to the head).

d) Any available sweeping and tripping techniques to the front or back of the legs.

e) Any available means of grappling such as choke holds, takedowns, and joint locks.

f) Any available blocking, parrying, and evasive techniques to stop, redirect, or neutralize oncoming blows and kicks of the opponent.

g) Any available footwork for advancing, retreating, sidestepping, or circling maneuvers.

9. Illegal Techniques

The following actions are considered illegal in Mu Tau matches:

a) Striking or kicking at the opponent's eyes, throat, back of the head, neck, spine, groin, and knee joints.

b) Elbowing and head-butting.

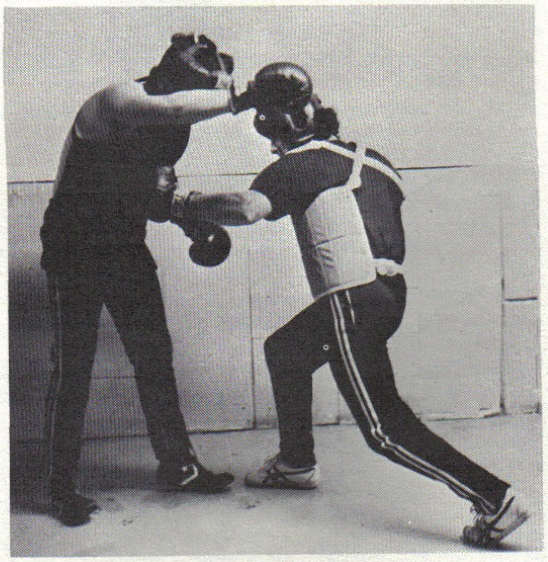
c) Attacking the opponent when he is down.

d) Disobeying the referee's instructions.;

e) Biting, scratching, or thumbing the eyes.

10. Salutation

Every boxer at the start of a bout must show a sign of respect to the referee and his opponent by giving the appropriate salutation. The fighters then touch gloves, return to their neutral corners, and move in to wage combat when signalled to do so.



These general rules were proposed to clearly establish the following objectives:

1. To perpetuate the Greek fighting philosophy through refinement and modernization.
2. To promote the art as a means of athletic competition and as a test of courage, endurance, and skill.
3. To provide realistic combat conditions while minimizing injury by adopting safety rules such as protective gear, rounds, weight classifications, etc., and eliminating the more dangerous blows such as head butts, elbowing, etc.

About the Author

Jim Arvanitis has been a physical fitness fanatic for nearly all of his life. He became interested in learning to protect himself as a youngster, taking up Western boxing and wrestling, in which he excelled. After four years of competing in private club matches and Golden Gloves bouts, Arvanitis sought out more effective methods of self-defense, feeling that what he knew was not enough in an all-out street-fight. He soon became close friends with an exchange student from Thailand nicknamed, "Supercat." Supercat was very proficient in Thai kickboxing and taught Arvanitis the finer points of this contact combative sport. It was not uncommon for the two to put on the gloves and spar for hours every day.

His kickboxing training inspired an interest in karate and kung fu. Though he would never formally study either art, Jim's intense research of the subjects through reading books and interaction with black belts in different styles who were impressed with his skill, exposed countless flaws and limitations in their approach to self-defense. In his opinion, traditional martial arts were too ritual-oriented and were geared more for tournament play than for street-fighting. As a result, Arvanitis decided to evolve his own martial arts philosophy, initiating what he called his "individual pursuit" of truth in combat. This he accomplished through a process of self-discovery and accumulating knowledge from a vast array of sources: reading, observing, analyzing, and experimentation in training. Jim was always modifying the techniques he learned in an attempt to increase their efficiency. Due to his natural athletic ability, Arvanitis was able to perform these moves flawlessly without the aid of an instructor. In fact, much of his material that was to become MU TAU was self-taught.

During this period, Arvanitis tested his theories in the only arena available in twentieth century America: the street. Standing five feet eight and weighing but 135 pounds, he could usually count on getting into a fight if he wanted to, without conspicuously having to start it himself. His involvement in numerous battles proved to be valuable experience in the development of his own system. He preferred this type of activity over competing in karate tournaments which he felt were too restrictive. Jim made a point of making notes on each of his fights, meticulously analyzing them to examine the effectiveness of his own moves and those of his opponents.

In 1967, Jim's fascination with the fighting disciplines prompted him to explore the roots of his Greek heritage as it applied to athletics and unarmed combat. He uncovered extensive information on the ancient Greek martial art of pankration. After a thorough investigation into the obscure subject, both in the United States and in Greece, Jim felt he had found the ultimate truth in combat. He worked diligently to revive the old art, patterning his concepts after those of his ancestors.

By 1971, the Greek-American had merged all of his knowledge and prior experience and had developed a devastating modern method of personal combat which he labeled, "MU TAU" (a combination of Greek letters which served as an abbreviation for "martial truth"). Frequently described as an "updated style of Greek fighting art" or a "sophisticated form of street-fighting", MU TAU was, in essence, a modified version of kickboxing. It expressed Arvanitis' feelings about combat and dealt specifically with the dynamics of an unrestrained fight together with advocating full-contact training.

From this point in his life, Arvanitis set out to prove the effectiveness and discipline of his development. He wanted to bring recognition to the Greek race as being the original practitioners of the martial arts. Jim, therefore, became obsessed with physical fitness and intensified his training methods. He realized that one's degree of strength, agility, and stamina constituted at least fifty percent of his fighting arsenal in actual combat. Over the years, the MU TAU founder would follow a rigorous workout schedule faithfully, subjecting his body to fierce and repeated exercise.

He would start his training with a 20-minute warmup of limbering and stretching. For endurance, Jim would run two to three miles every day, and jump rope for up to fifteen minutes without a break. He also did exercises for his

neck and abdominal muscles in order to withstand the shock impact of head and body blows. To strengthen his midsection, Arvanitis did leg raises and situps. He did his situps on either a Roman chair or incline board, doing as many as 100 repetitions on the latter apparatus before adding weight for more resistance. A firm believer in quality rather than quantity, Jim performed his situps slowly, his body descending slower than ascending. He also concentrated heavily on developing his forearms, to put more power into his punches. Included in his exercises were reverse curls with weights and the use of a wrist roller. He also did isometrics and squeezed a pair of hand grips thousands of times while watching television. To Arvanitis, being good was essential to promoting his art and this required a lot of practice. The practice of the art became the most important thing and Arvanitis pursued his craft with a vengeance. His physical fitness was so superb that he was able to perform pushups on but his thumbs, a feat for which he set an undisputed world record in 1975, doing 45 of them in an astounding 51 seconds. *

MU TAU differed radically from "classical" karate and kung fu in its footwork, mobility, and training. Whatever Jim considered unrealistic or obsolete was not included in the format of the system. One of these unnecessary drills was fixed forms or katas. To Arvanitis, these did nothing but impart a false sense of security to the student. In actual combat, confrontations were sudden and unexpected and one could not adequately defend himself using a set pattern of moves since there was no way to predict what type of attack the opponent would attempt. It was Jim's logic that learning was not a matter of mechanical precision or the ability to memorize and recite a prearranged routine. Nor was it strict imitation. On the contrary, it was a process of self-discovery, one which was free and spontaneous. He condemned classical drilling as shackling the body and spirit, further stating that genuine understanding was impossible unless one was free to express himself. Reality was the essence of MU TAU training. In order to prepare for actual combat conditions, Arvanitis advocated all-out sparring with full contact and protective gear to minimize injuries. Those who sparred with Jim donned headguards, body armor, and pillowy sixteen-ounce gloves.

He also felt that hitting air was not enough to develop effective blows and kicks. To improve these skills, Jim believed in utilizing an assortment of striking devices. These included anything from a sheet of paper to bags filled with air, sand, or beans. One of his favorite pieces of equipment was the air shield. Jim would move in from several feet away and apply a hard sidekick, trying to penetrate the target and knock the man holding the shield down. Anyone who has been on the receiving end of Jim's kick will attest to the uncanny force that he is able to generate.

Music, too, played an integral part in the evolution of MU TAU. From his earlier participation in boxing, Jim was aware of the benefits of working out to music. This became the training aid that stimulated the rhythm in his movements. Arvanitis would develop his moves by shadow boxing to fast-tempo records.

Arvanitis' strength was well known by his followers. He was always anxious to display his power to anyone, other martial artists in particular. He often invited karate black belts to his home for workouts. Jim would permit them to kick him full-force while he held the air shield. To this day, not one person has really shaken him. Then, he would take his turn kicking the shield. More often than not, the resulting force lifted the holder off his feet, sending him crashing backwards into a wall. Jim always gave his partners the option of bracing for the attack or backing off once they sensed the oncoming kick, avoiding any contact whatsoever. His inward motion was so fast, however, that high-ranking karatemen were unable to get away from his simple attack.

A visitor to his home for the first time was usually coerced into standing with his back to the heavy bag. Jim would blast away with his strongest kick. The impact from the kick was devastating, to say the least. It either flattened his unsuspecting guest or gave him a severe case of whiplash.

It was quite common for Jim to bring his focuser pad with him wherever he went, hoping to find someone game enough to hold it for him to punch. Many people were impressed by Jim's punching power. One show of force of his was to hit the glove as hard as he could with his hook. The severity of the blow was such that the holder's hand and arm were sore for days to come.

Though relatively small, Arvanitis packed a mighty wallop in either hand or foot. This was due in part to his specialized training but also due to his knowledge of kinesiology and physics. He was extremely adept at getting the maximum out of his body to provide the most leverage in his blows. His short-range punch was a good example of this. He would ask a volunteer to stand upright, holding a thick cushion on his chest. Jim would place a chair about five feet behind him. With his fist but a few inches from the target, Jim would send a short, jolting punch to his assistant. The force of the blow amazed the recipient, as he was propelled backward into the chair.

In 1973, the energetic athlete resided in Southern California for a brief time and promptly made the cover of Black Belt, the world's foremost martial arts publication. This article brought national recognition to Arvanitis as being the country's leading authority on the ancient Greek pankration. In the years that followed, he was featured in several more magazines such as Karate Illustrated, Official Karate, Fighting Champions, and again in Black Belt. Jim was also invited to give exhibitions of his art on national television. After he appeared on ABC-TV's Good Day Show, the producers, who had hosted many martial artists, informed him that his electrifying demo had set a record for viewer response.

As Arvanitis' popularity continued to grow, he was often asked to perform demonstrations of his prowess at club meetings and at karate tournaments. A typical demonstration included feats like arms-forward pushups on his thumbs and two-finger pushups using one arm. He sometimes had concrete slabs broken over his stomach by a sledgehammer-wielding assistant while he lay prone across two chairs. He awed thousands of spectators with his punching and kicking power. Though he did not stress high kicks, he nevertheless displayed his extraordinary flexibility by kicking a target held seven feet in the air without his

supporting foot leaving the ground. He performed various moves with lightning speed and perfect form, always emphasizing the efficiency and simplicity of his technique. For show, he would break boards or bricks. With his best kick, Arvanitis often snapped up to ten inches of pine boards.

In the early '70s, Arvanitis had opened a few academies to teach his art. He called them the "Spartan Academy of Martial Art." Because he considered his clubs 'exclusive' establishments, there were no commercial signs or identifying marks and classes were always small. Most of Jim's students were attracted to the club through word of mouth since he did not like to advertise. In 1975, Jim discontinued teaching publicly, and began to demand as much as $60 an hour for private instruction. It was his opinion that the best way to learn MU TAU was on a one-to-one basis.

Today, Jim Arvanitis stands as a noted figure in the martial arts field and continues to drive himself toward new goals. By developing MU TAU, he not only satisfied his yearning for a total fighting freedom, but would stimulate worldwide interest in Greek martial art.

What follows is an outline of one of my personal training programs. It is not designed for my students and has undergone numerous modifications in reaching its present state.

Sequence A
Monday
Wednesday
Friday

Sequence B
Tuesday
Thursday
Saturday

I. Warmup Exercises

1. Rope Jumping
2. Neck Rolls
3. Truck Bends (front/rear)
4. Head to Knee Touch/Leg on bar
5. Seated Body Fold - A, B
6. Alternate Side Splits

1. Jumping Jacks
2. Knee Bends
3. Cat Stretch
4. Frontal Static Leg Stretch
5. High Side Leg Raise (pulley)
6. Full Split

II. Roadwork (2-5 miles)

III. Waist/Forearm Exercises

1. Torso Twists
2. Palm-up Curl
3. Roman Chair Situps
4. Reverse Curl
5. Knee Drawing
6. Side Bends

1. Incline Situps
2. Wrist Roll
3. Twisting Situps
4. Leverage Bar Twist
5. Leg Raises
6. Vise Grips

IV. Power Training

Monday/Tuesday - Neck Lifts
Arm Press to bar
Elevated Pushups
Tuesday/Friday - Heel Raises
Bench Press
Behind-Neck Press
Wednesday/Saturday - Wide Grip Chins behind Neck
End of Bar Rowing
Shrugs

Jim

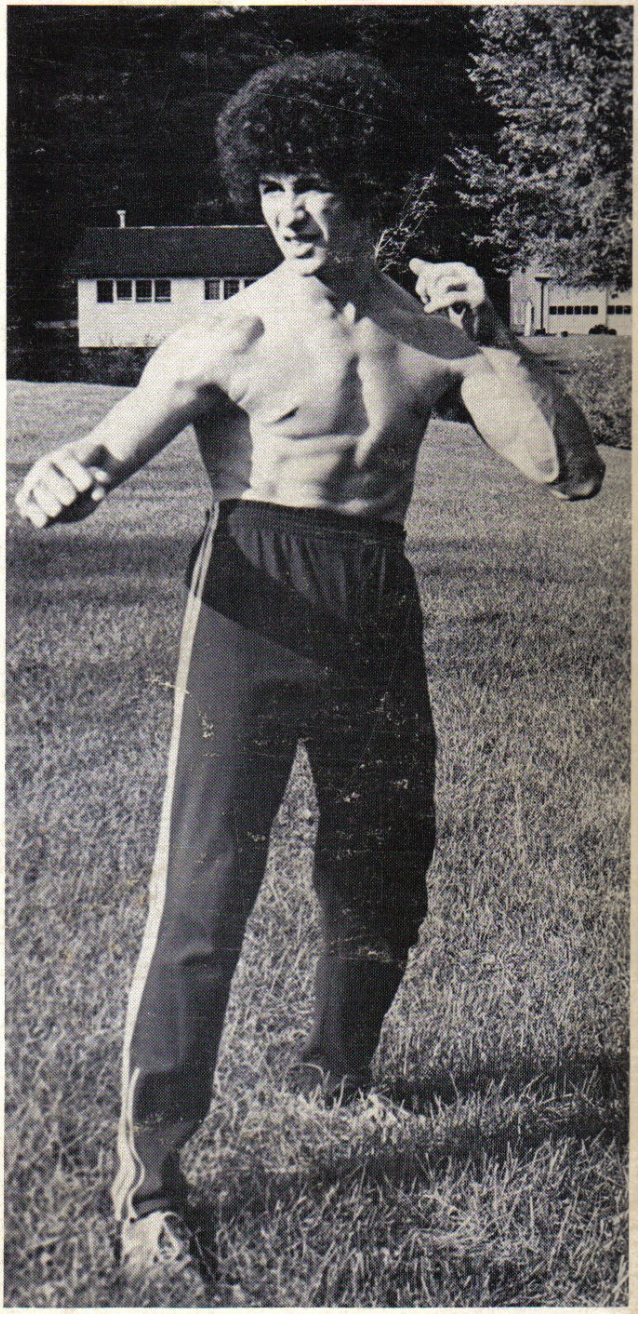
*This record was subsequently broken by Mr. Arvanitis on NBC-TV's *The Guinness Game* where he performed an astounding 61 thumb pushups in a mere 47 seconds.

JIM ARVANITIS

Jim Arvanitis has spent the major portion of his life in study and refinement of the martial arts. Internationally recognized as the world's leading exponent of the Greek martial art, his formal training and personal research includes both Eastern and Western combative forms including Boxing, Wrestling, Karate, and Greek Pankration (The little known ancient Greek combat form, so destructive that it was banned as a sport!)

It was only after extensive years of study of the classical fighting arts of his Greek ancestors that Mr. Arvanitis developed the concept set forth in this book—**MU TAU. . .** an eclectic style of personal combat based on self-expression and freedom of movement.

Today, the innovative Mr. Arvanitis is recognized as the foremost expert in Greek Martial Art and as one of the select few who has attained national and international recognition for his role in modernizing the martial arts. He has exhibited his awe-inspiring prowess at Karate tournaments across the country and on national television.

"You are about to read the story of what is very likely the most efficient form of unarmed combat ever devised. I feel that MU TAU is the best and most practical martial art being taught today."

—Massad F. Ayoob
Black Belt Magazine